



MADHUSUDAN DAS :

THE MAN AND HIS MISSIONS

Edited By -

DEBENDRA KUMAR DASH

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PRAGATI UTKAL SANGHA
ROURKELA

First published 1998

Published by :

PRAGATI UTKAL SANGHA

B/9, Fakirmohan Nagar, (Sector-7)

Rourkela - 769 003, Orissa

Typeset by :

KUMARIKA - GANTOTRI

B/144, Sector -4, Rourkela - 769 002

Printed by :

T.K. Mohapatra

OPTIMA(OFFSET) PRINTS

Sutahat, Cuttack - 753 001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my sincere gratitude to Late Shoilabala Das, the adopted daughter (grand daughter ?) of Utkal Gaurav Madhusudan , Late Brajabandhu Das, a junior colleague of Madhusudan and Late S.N. Bhanja Deo, Ex-ruling Chief of Kanika as they had given kind permission to Pragati Utkal Sangha, Rourkela to publish/reprint the books/essays authored/collected by them. I am very much grateful to Late Dr N.K. Sahu, the eminent historian and former Vice-Chancellor of Sambalpur University, as he was the man who had taken the first step in this regard by collecting some of the materials published in this book.

I am thankful to Dr Sricharan Mohanty, other office-bearers and members of Pragati Utkal Sangha for giving me the opportunity to edit this book. With missionary zeal and devotion, the members of Pragati Utkal Sangha have undertaken a project to publish the works and speeches of Madhusudan. *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator* (edited by Dr N.K. Sahu and Dr P.K. Misra) published by this organisation was the first outcome of this project. The present book is the second publication in this series. I hope, the book 'Madhusudan Das : The Leader', the third book of the said project will be completed and published at the earliest. Such a commendable project of national importance should be encouraged and cheered by all.

I am also grateful to Acharya Bhavananda (formerly Dr Bhabagrahi Misra) of Bhubaneswar, Dr Krushna Charan Behera and Prof. Dasarathi Das of Cuttack, Mr. Surasingha Pattanayak of Berhampur, Dr. D.M. Praharaj (Principal, Rourkela Municipal College, Rourkela), Dr D.P. Mohapatra (Reader, Govt. Evening College, Rourkela), Mr. Kshirod Prasad Mohanty (Dr H.K. Mahatab State Library, Bhubaneswar) and Mr. Chittaranjan Kar (Utkal Sahitya Samaj, Cuttack) for their advice, guidance and help.

Lastly, my thanks are also due to Miss Kumarika, Miss Gangotri, Mr Haribandhu Khamari and Mr Sanjib Sahoo for type-setting and to Mr. Tapan Kumar Mohapatra for printing of the book.

The 28th April, 1998

D.K.Dash

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	III
Notes on Contributors	VII

PART - I

LIFE OF MADHUSUDAN DAS SHOILABALA DAS

I	Birth and Childhood	3
II	High School and College Education	10
III	Early Days of His Career	18
IV	Legal Career in Cuttack	21
V	Advancement of Orissa Now His Definite Aim	27
VI	His Efforts for the Industrial Development of Orissa	35
VII	His Works for A United Oriya Race	44
VIII	His Works for Wider Recognition To Orissa	50
IX	Social, Educational and Administrative Works Resumed	61
X	Madhusudan's Ministership	68
XI	Life So Sweet, So Beautiful	89
XII	Last Phase of An Eventful Career	96
XIII	The Valley of Shadow of Death	106
XIV	L'ENVOI	110
XV	The First Anniversary of Death of Madhusudan	114

APPENDICES :

I	Madhusudan : The Founder of Utkal Union Conference	117
II	Utkal Young Men's Association	122
III	A Notice	124

PART - II

THE PERSONALITY AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF MADHUSUDAN: CLOSE VIEWS

I	Madhusudan Das : The Builder of New Orissa <i>Brajabandhu Das</i>	127
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II	How Women Got the Right to Practise in Law Courts of India <i>Sudhansubala Hazra</i>	143
III	Memorable Incidents <i>Sudhansubala Hazra</i>	152
IV	Recollections <i>Chandra Kumar Hazra</i>	158
V	My Impression <i>Shyamaprasad Mukherjee</i>	163
VI	Madhusudan Das as I Knew Him <i>Sachchidananda Sinha</i>	167
VII	My Reminiscences of Mr Das <i>Gopal Chandra Praharaj</i>	173
VIII	Mr Das and Myself <i>Nilakantha Das</i>	178
IX	Madhusudan Das <i>Pareswar Mohanty</i>	185
X	A Cure for All Ills <i>Bhikari Charan Patnaik</i>	190
XI	Mr M.S.Das : The Lawyer and the Leader <i>Gajendra Prasad Das</i>	192
XII	Mr. M.S.Das and the All-India Christian Conference <i>S.C. Mukherjee</i>	197
XIII	An Aspect of Mr. Das's Christinity <i>Jonathan Mohanty</i>	200
XIV	I Remember <i>Girija Shankar Ray</i>	202

PART-III

SOME LECTURES AND LETTERS OF MADHUSUDAN

I	Ourselves	207
II	Duty of An Indian Christian	211
III	Dignity of Labour	216
IV	Duty of An Educated Indian	231
V	Letters from London	233
VI	Letters to Shoilabala	244
VII	Letters to Rajendra Narayana Bhanja Deo	256

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Shoilabala Das was born in the Bhowanipur (Calcutta) house of Madhusudan in the year 1975. She was the eldest child of Ambica Charan Hazra and Prosannamayee. Prosannamayee was the god-daughter of Madhusudan's wife Soudamini. So both the families were very close and were living together for a certain period. After the death of Prosannamayee in 1892, Shoilabala with her sister Sudhansubala and three brothers came to Cuttack and became a part of Madhusudan's family. In 1900 Shoilabala changed her surname from Hazra to Das honouring the wish of Madhusudan. She passed her Entrance Examination from Bethune School and I.A. Examination from Deveton College --- both of Calcutta. She was the first girl-student of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack but she could not clear all the papers of B.A. Examination due to ill health. In the year 1906 she went to England and took a course in teacher's training. In collaboration with Madhusudan she upgraded Ravenshaw Hindu Vidyalaya from a primary school to a Girls' High School, which was eventually the first of its kind in Orissa. She was its Secretary and honorary Lady Principal. Shoilabala handed over the school to Government in the year 1913 and she relinquished the posts held, thereafter. She also took active part in establishing Hindu Widow Training School at Cuttack. She had written a series of essays in Oriya highlighting the state and need of women education in Orissa. She was associated with a number of social and educational activities and had functioned as an honorary magistrate in Patna and a member of Syndicate of Patna University. More importantly, she had played the role of a hostess and was associated with all social and political activities of Madhusudan as her daughter. After independence, she was the member of Rajya Sabha for one term. She had edited and published the book "Life of Madhusudan Das As Seen By Many Eyes"(1956) which has remained a standard reference book on Madhusudan. Her unpublished monograph on the life of Madhusudan (which has been published as the first part of this book) has been freely used by the later biographers. She has chronicled her own life-story in a book----- 'I Look Before and After.'

VIII

Brajabandhu Das was born in Patia Zamindari with which Madhusudan was attached from his school days. Brajabandhu was an advocate and has worked as a junior to Madhusudan for a number of years. He had taken great interest in popularising the words and deeds of Madhusudan. He provided source-materials to most of the biographers of Madhusudan. His interest and contribution towards this cause have been freely recognised by Nabakishor Das, Pandit Surya Narayan Dash and Surendra Mohanty, all well-known biographers. He has also written a number of essays in Oriya on Madhusudan. Till his death in 1973, he was closely associated with Pragati Utkal Sangha of Rourkela, the publisher of this book.

Sudhansubala Hazra was the younger sister of Shoilabala. She was the first lady advocate of India and she had fought a great battle to enter legal profession. But temperamentally she was more attached to teaching profession; so she came back to teaching, leaving legal practice and became the Lady Principal of Ravenshaw Girls' High School, Cuttack. For sometime she was the Inspectress of Schools in Bihar and Orissa. From her early childhood she was very much attached to Madhusudan. She has described her odyssey in entering legal profession in the book 'Women At Law'.

Chandra Kumar Hazra was the second brother of Shoilabala. He became a barrister by the efforts of Madhusudan and practised in the Courts of Medinapur.

Shyamaprasad Mukherjee was the son of Asutosh Mukherjee. Shyamaprasad was an educationist and parliamentarian of highest order. He was the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University and a Minister in the cabinet of Pandit Nehru. He was the founder-president of Bharatiya Jana Sangha.

Sachidananda Sinha was a barrister by profession. He was a well-known politician and educationist of Bihar and belonged to the liberal school. He was the Finance Member of Bihar and Orissa Government under Dyarchy. Later he was also the Vice-Chancellor of Patna University. Dr Sinha was closely associated with Madhusudan as colleague and one of his family friends.

IX

Gopal Chandra Praharaj was a legal practitioner by profession. He is better known, throughout Orissa as an excellent prose-writer and lexicographer. His 'Purnachandra Odia Bhasakosh' is a unique quadrilingual dictionary of seven volumes and is regarded as a monumental work.

Nilakantha Das is one among the makers of modern Orissa. In collaboration with **Pandit Gopabandhu**, he had established a Vana Vidyalaya at Satyabadi of Saskhigopal and was its first Headmaster. Later he participated in the freedom movement and became an active politician. After the death of **Gopabandhu**, he headed Orissa Provincial Congress and was a member of Central Legislative Assembly for many years. For five years he was the Speaker of Orissa Legislative Assembly. As a litterateur he is famous for his classic 'Konarke' and prose-writings.

Pareswar Mohanty was a junior contemporary of **Madhusudan** at Cuttack Bar. He took active interest in Utkal Union Conference and other political activities. He has also contributed a number of essays to contemporary periodicals and journals.

Bhikari Charan Patnaik was an advocate by profession and belonged to the Cuttack Bar. He is known for his dramas and poems written in Oriya. Like **Madhusudan** he tried to regenerate Orissan economy through industrialisation. His efforts to revive the cottage - industries of Orissa was commendable.

Gajendra Prasad Das was born at Balasore. After obtaining M.A. and B.L. degrees he started legal practice as a junior to **Madhusudan**. Later on he shifted to Patna and became an advocate of Patna High Court.

S.C. Mukherjee was an advocate of Calcutta High Court and a junior contemporary of **Madhusudan**. As a leader of Indian Christian Community, he was closely associated with the All-India Christian Association.

X

Jonathan Mohanty was a professor in Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. He had taken an active role in establishing Christ College at Cuttack.

Girija Sankar Ray was the son of Rama Sankar , the famous Oriya dramatist and novelist. He was a professor in English at Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and is known for his contribution to Oriya literary criticism.

Shailendra Narayan Bhanja Deo was the ruling Chief of Kanika of Cuttack district. Like his father Rajendra Narayan Bhanja Deo, he was associated with Utkal Union Conference and was the organiser of its session of 1933, held at Cuttack. From childhood he was closely attached to Madhusudan and Shoilabala.



PART-I

Life of
Madhusudan Das

Shoilabala Das

I

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

Madhusudan was born on the 28th April, 1848 at Satyabhamapur, an obscure village in the district of Cuttack. His father was Raghunath Das and his mother was Parbati Devi. He had one brother and two sisters, he being the elder of the two sons.

The family- priest cast his horoscope. His birth is recorded upon palm leaves in the era which dates from the reign of the then Raja of Puri. His horoscope indicated that he would be a "great man", would travel much, would change his religion and would grow up to be very charitable and generous in disposition. It also showed that he would never be rich but would never be in want, and that he would live long. It was further prophesied that the 85th year would be the most critical time in his life, and that he would die of intestinal complications. All these predictions came out true. Both his parents and his grandfather lived long. His great- grandfather was a famous and well-known Shikari, who died at the age of 104 having fallen off his horse when he was out shooting. His grandfather died at the age of 94, and his father at 90. He was born in a family which enjoyed affluence even shortly before his birth. It lost its money but not the esteem in which the villagers held it on account of its respectability. Madhusudan was looked upon as the scion of an old family of zamindars, the memory of whose religious endowments and charitable bequests were enshrined in the engravings of temples and 'Maths' (monasteries) in his village.

An interesting story is related to the childhood of Madhusudan. One morning Madhusudan, a baby of six months or so, was left by his mother in the courtyard of his house in the sunshine, when she returned she found a cobra playing near the baby with its hood raised full. The cobra did not harm the baby and left quietly on seeing her. Priests and Pandits predicted that this was an indication that Madhusudan would be a "Chakravarti"—a king of kings. In fact he never had a kingdom, but throughout his life he enjoyed the respect and homage of the people and the princes of Utkal. He was known

as the "Uncrowned King of Orissa". His generosity, moreover, was so great that it would cost the munificence of many a prince into the shade.

He lived as a king and died like a saint.

HERITAGE OF A SATEE'S BLOOD AND IT'S INSPIRATION :

Madhusudan was very proud of the fact that his great grandmother had been a *Satee*. A note on this subject in his own handwriting was found in his box after his death. The note runs as follows:- "My great-grandmother, in the direct line of ascent, was a Satee. She offered her mortal frame a living sacrifice on the funeral pyre of her husband. This took place before my birth. But in my childhood, my grandmother i.e., my father's mother, used to describe the event in language whose warmth prepared my impressionable heart to receive her narration, together with the effects which the event she had witnessed had produced in her mind. I had a vivid recollection of the graphic narration of the event. The Satee's husband was ill for four days. He refused food. He felt he had the final call from his Creator. The wife (Satee) ministered to her partner in life on his sick bed. She took no food. He expired at dawn. As he expired, she gave orders for the erection of his funeral pyre. Her eyes were dry, she shed no tears. She went through the ceremonies becoming a young bride before she is taken to the altar by her father to be given away. She had ordered my grandmother to take two garlands of flowers. One of them, at her bidding, my grandmother (her daughter-in-law) put round her neck. At this moment she spoke a few solemn words to my grandmother, installing her as the mistress of the house. The other garland she took in her hand. The household party went to the funeral pyre, where they met the residents of the neighbouring village, who had already assembled. All stood in solemn silence, there was no music, no cheering, no cry of any kind. The funeral pyre had been raised. It consisted mostly of sandal wood, over which ghee (clarified butter) had been poured in profusion. The deceased was laid on the pyre. The Satee saluted, circled round her husband's neck, sat at his feet with folded hands and ordered the pyre to be lighted. The fire, which was used to light the pyre, had been supplied by an Agnihotri. In the twinkling of an eye, there was a huge flame of fire which went up to the heavens: smoke charged with frankin-

cense rising to announce her journey to her departed husband's soul in Heaven. The scene represents the wedding of the souls of two persons who were husband and wife in mortal flesh. The fire which wrapped the mortal bodies of the couple, kindled a fire in the hearts of the spectators.

"My grandmother took delight in painting the scene for me, and I must have heard it at least fifty times while yet a child, when she enacted particular parts of the event, she would press me to her bosom which I would find all wet with tears. They were tears of joy. She was proud of her mother-in-law. The narrative set my imagination aglow. Every time I heard it, I felt my imagination as if it was on fire. The sentiments found their way to my impressionable heart, and thence the arteries carried them through the whole system. A feeling grew upon me that the Satee's blood was running in my arteries and veins. Even at my advanced age I feel it my sacred duty not to taint the Satee's blood by swerving from the path of duty from fear of personal injury or loss of any kind. The Satee's blood guided me and made me proud. I felt pride in the surroundings of my village, and felt it was a sacred place on earth. The Satee's blood made me what I am, and always gave me courage in my troubles.

"The administrative wisdom in enacting regulation XVII of 1829 is problematical. A careful study of the text of the Regulations shows the presumption that in every case a Satee was the victim of a cruel practice of society. I do not propose to present the reader of these line with a balance sheet of the gain and loss to the spiritual side of human nature in genuine cases of a woman's faith in the indissoluble nature of the matrimonial relation. Can we not conceive of a noble woman who understood her relation with her husband in the words of Christ. 'Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God has joined together, let no man put asunder'. I once had a friendly discussion on the subject with the Hon. Sir John Woodburn when he was Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. I observed that the framers of the Regulation which made the Satee practice a crime, never saw a case of genuine Satee. The practice died before the camera came in to use, and there is probably no faithful representation of such a scene, or I should have shown His

Honour one. A few months after, Sir John sent to me a valuable present, a book, the front page of which contains a painting of a Satee".

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY EDUCATION :

An interesting account of the early education of Madhusudan has been written by himself. It was found amongst his papers after his death. "All the surroundings of my life were calculated to develop pride; I do not know whether to call it pride or vanity. My life was no exception to the general rule of human development; the environment of my life developed what is known as megalomania. My initial education was entrusted to a man who could teach reading and writing in my mother-tongue, the Oriya language. He knew arithmetic also. The terms of service were food, clothing, and Rs.7/- a month. The school room was a part of the family residence, and the room had a mud floor and mud walls. The mud floor and a piece of chalk make up the writing materials used in a village school. The alphabet is written on the floor by the teacher, and the child is required to run the chalk over a letter, pronouncing aloud the name of the letter. The mud wall serves the purpose of memoranda tablets and diaries, where the teacher records enactments and accounts.. Mud walls are also used for painting the figure of men, animals, and scenery. This is done by women. The designs are sometimes attractive and considering that coloured earth made in to a paste with water is the paint used, and that the fingers take the place of the painter-brush, it is no wonder that some of these paintings have been considered by experts in the art as an indication of inborn artistic taste."

"The students are required to squat on the floor with his legs folded, his whole weight resting on his feet. He has no seat, and as he had to cover the space over which the alphabetical letters are marked in chalk, it is good exercise for the lower limbs. The seat provided for the teacher is a mat, woven with coconut leaves."

"The next step was to learn and to write on the palm leaf. In Orissa the leaves of palm trees and an iron pen with a sharp point constituted the writing materials. The subsequent introduction of paper, pen and ink, has not completely displaced them; they are still in use in the villages, and are indispensable in keeping the records

of the great Jagannath temple, in writing horoscope and on certain ceremonial occasions. Writing on palm leaf with a stylus is engraving; writing on paper with ink is painting. The stylus has a very sharp point and as it is in the nature of engraving, some men can produce calligraphy with it.

"Painting on the wall does not find favour with the present public taste, but we can see it in the Vatican and in the palace of Versailles, where great Napoleon spent the proudest and perhaps the happiest period of his ambitious life. The use of the wall in a private man's office for keeping a memo, of engagements made, will be more effective and reliable because the record stares him in the face. An advocate who has to study a very large number of documents, and makes a note of facts of a particular issue when they are to be collected from portions of several documents and from the depositions of a large number of witnesses, will find it very helpful to nail the papers to the walls of his office, and walk about the room to study them. Aristotle's peripatetic method of teaching others is equally effective in learning, which is only teaching oneself".

From an early age Madhusudan was taught by his mother not to seek honour by means of association with men in higher stations in life. Madhusudan used to say, "The grass around a rose plant doesn't acquire either the sweet scent or the colour of the flower; so the association with people in higher status does not bring honour or riches to the man of inferior status". Madhusudan never desired to shine in the reflected glory of others.

When a mere child, Madhusudan once flared up into indignation and vowed that he would not take any food that day. He retired to sleep without food, but at night he woke up very hungry, and asked his mother for something to eat. Quietly and firmly, she said to him, "you vowed not to take any food today, so don't you think you ought to keep your word?" Silence was his only reply and the little boy went hungry to keep his vow. This made an impression on his mind which nothing could efface. Madhusudan was always a man of his word.

As a boy he was very mischievous, but he was always noted for his determination, courage, wit and humour. Being intelligent

and clever, he got through his lessons with credit and speed and would spend the rest of his time playing about.

Out of numerous stories of his early school days showing his early school days showing his mischievous and humour, one or two instances may be given here.

The Pundit Mahashaya had been explaining to the boys the meaning of the words "Goshala", "Hastishala" ('Shala' meaning "abode") and the next morning, when the Pundit came to the school room, he found written on the wall in big letters, "Punditshala". On seeing this the Pundit was greatly enraged (because the word 'shala' is indigenous slang for 'brother-in-law'), and with the rod in his hand, he asked in a thunderous voice, "Who wrote this ?" Like innocence itself, Madhusudan went up to the teacher and confessed his fault. When asked to explain his conduct, he referred to the interpretation of the teacher himself, viz, shala signifies abode. All the boys giggled at this explanation, but Madhusudan argued it all in such a convincing manner that the offended Pundit had to let him off.

The typical Pundit of the village school is apt to go off to sleep, with a gaping mouth, after he has set some task to the pupils. Once, when Madhusudan's Pundit did the same, Madhusudan crept quietly to him and carefully removed one of his wooden sandals, which was more than halfway off the Pundit's foot, and put it in his own pocket. A few minutes later he went out to drink water. Madhusudan tied a stone to the shoe, threw it into a tank and returned to the classroom just in time to find the Pundit awakened from his slumber and feeling about with his foot for the missing sandal. He could not find it. He searched for it everywhere in the classroom, Madhusudan made a pretence of helping him and then quietly asked whether he remembered bringing the two sandals. The Pundit raised his stick to strike him, but with folded hands he meekly said that once he himself had forgotten to put on two shoes, and had gone out with only one, and so, naturally he feared that the Pundit might have done the same.

His father engaged a Maulvi to teach him Persian; he learnt it well, and could talk freely in that language. Madhusudan was the leader of the boys in the village, and they all admired him for his courage and intellect. His father wanted him to learn English, so his

village education came to an end, and he was brought to the town of Cuttack.

In his childhood many Brahmins blessed Madhusudan in words which he did not understand. The usual form of blessing was "May you live to be 108 years old". Commenting on this later in life he said, "Though I had seen many old men and women, I did not realise what old age meant. Even in a healthy constitution, age insidiously introduces its infirmities. But in a person who has the constant complaint of an incurable disease for nearly fifty years, time makes havoc of the physical constitution. The body becomes a drag on the soul's onward march. It is an obstruction to the fulfilment of the soul's ambition. Such sentiment Madhusudan expressed in his later years when he suffered greatly from an incurable intestinal disease.



II

HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE EDUCATION

Madhusudan has left an account of his education at the High English School at Cuttack. In this account he describes very vividly the humiliation he had to suffer. He writes "My admission in the English High School brought me into contact with Bengali boys and Bengali teachers. The administration of the East India Company had brought into Orissa a large number of Bengalis. They were familiar with the system of British administration. Bengal had been under British administration for a pretty long time. They knew the English language and were conversant with the rules and laws of British administration. They were helpful to the officers who were responsible for the administration of Orissa. The people of Orissa were profoundly ignorant of the rules and laws by which the administration was carried on. It is natural for the Bengalis to treat the Oriyas with contempt. Orissa is the "Holy Land" of India. The people were averse to the adoption of the mode of daily life which the Bengalis had adopted. There was a difference in dress, in language, in food, and in a thousand other respects."

Madhusudan next describes the way in which the Bengalis teased him. "I was the target. All my Bengali class comrades constantly fired their volley of sarcasm and insult. I was dressed in clothes which were the product of the village weaver. The English shirt had not then made its way to Orissa. I was dressed in what is called 'Mirjai'. The insult and scorn was my share in the daily life at school produced in me in the end a spirit of forgiveness coupled with a feeling of indifference as to what my Bengali comrades thought of me. I had long hair which was tied at the back. This they considered the sign of my being a girl, not a boy. In Bengal at that time short cropped hair was the fashion. One day one of my Bengali companions cut off my hair with a pair of scissors. I took it in good

spirit. I asked my friend to let me have the tuft of hair, saying that I wanted to keep it, in order to prove my sex if I ever thought of marrying a Bengali girl. There was a sting in this retort. The incident narrated below brought the racial feeling to climax."

"Our headmaster was a young Bengali whose qualification was that he had passed the Entrance Examination, now called Matriculation. The selection from English Literature which were prescribed for the Entrance Examination were taught by the Headmaster who was a recent indent from Bengal. He interpreted a sentence in a certain way. I considered his interpretation incorrect and had the courage to say so. This was considered an instance of impudence and insolence which could not be tolerated in an Oriya boy. My name was removed from the register and I was expelled. This was a critical moment of my life. I realised the importance of my expulsion from school. It meant a full stop to my progress in English education. The value and importance of the Bengalis was due to their knowledge of the English language. Without a knowledge of this language it was impossible for my future life to have a long journey through the arid desert. Some of my Oriya schoolmates advised me to plead for my pardon to the Headmaster. I spent a most restless night, but the suggestion did not appeal to my conscience or sense of self-respect. Early next morning I went to Mr. Haley's bungalow. He was the controlling authority of the school. I do not remember his initials, but he held some appointment in the Collectorate building. I did not then know of the existence of the Indian Civil Service, but soon after this incident of my life, I learnt that Mr. Haley came out from England, and in course of time the highest office in the country's administration would be within his reach. Early next morning I went to this gentleman's bungalow, dressed as an Oriya with my mirjai on. I was in the verandah. A table was covered by white linen, and on it were the white cups and saucers. I did not know then what porcelain was, neither had I ever seen a European eating his meals. The peon or orderly in attendance explained to me the use of the table and the things on it. I stood out below the raised verandah to interview the Sahib when he came out. At last the great auspicious moment arrived. The Sahib came out. He talked to me in Oriya and asked me what I wanted. I

narrated what had happened and showed him the passage. He asked me how I understood the passage and how the Headmaster understood it. On hearing me he smiled and asked me whether I was an Oriya, and to what caste I belonged. He asked me to go to the school on the following morning at 11 a.m. I went to the school a little before the appointed time, and awaited at the entrance of the school premises. Mr. Haley came in time. I bowed to him as he passed me in his buggy. I have no knowledge of what transpired, though at the time I felt an intense curiosity to know the details of the Headmaster's interview with him. Soon after Mr. Haley left the place. I was sent for by the Headmaster who said he had pardoned me and had decided to take me back into the school. After this incident there was a perceptible change in the conduct of my Bengali schoolmates towards me. The impressions which the incident produced on my mind can be recalled in their original vigour."

"During the years of the Bengali persecution at school I looked back with a sigh, a regret, sometimes with tears, to the days I spent in my village before I was transported to Cuttack for my English education. I thought of the days when I was loved, respected and blessed as the scion of an old family of Zamindars. But I was beginning to be reconciled to a life where scorn, contempt and insult would be my share. My re-admission into the school dispelled the dark clouds which had gathered on the horizon, a long visit of future life appeared before me. I realised the truth of the Sanskrit couplet. "A king is honoured in his own Country, but a learned man is honoured everywhere". I learned to distinguish between inherited respect and self-acquired respect, and I decided to devote the rest of my life to the pursuit of respect earned by merit."

"I passed the Entrance Examination in 1864, in my sixteenth year. There was no college at the time in Orissa. I had to go to Calcutta for further studies. The prospect of meeting the Bengalis in their own land was not attractive or reassuring. I decided to acquire faculty in speaking Bengali. The Bengalis of Calcutta and the surrounding tract of country speak Bengali which differs considerably from the language in West Bengal, both in the pronunciation of the same letter of the alphabet and in the cadence of a sentence."

LIFE AT BALASORE :

After passing Entrance Examination Madhusudan spent two years in Balasore. It is not possible to say why at this stage Madhusudan had to work as the third teacher of the Balasore Zilla School on a salary of Rs. 30/- per month for a period of two years. It may have been due to the fact at least for the time being his father, for some reason or other would not allow the expenses of his further education in Bengal. Later on his father was financing him regularly during his stay at Calcutta until Madhusudan's conversion to Christianity.

Babu Fakir Mohan Senapati, a great literary genius of Orissa, wrote of Madhusudan that whoever had come in contact with young Madhusudan at this period of his life, was struck with his intelligence and ambition. Madhusudan cherished a zeal for higher education. He saved, what money he could, from his salary and in 1866 he went to Calcutta to study in a college. Owing to his great love of English education he decided, in spite of his past experience with Bengali comrades, to brave their insults, ridicule, and scorn in his daily college life, and practise forgiveness.

COLLEGE DAYS :

Madhusudan went to Calcutta for his college education in 1866 and joined the London Missionary Society's College at Bhowanipur. In those days there was no railway communication between Calcutta and Cuttack. The only means of transport was the steamer, which took four days to reach Calcutta from Cuttack. He was then fresh from that most backward province of Orissa, and was not smart-looking and up-to-date like the Bengali boys, so he resolved that he would not talk to any body in Bengali till he could speak it like a Bengali. After only a few month's time he could speak the language fluently and distinctly with his Bengali friends. He mastered the language so well that he could deliver speeches in fine chaste Bengali, but he was never ashamed to own that he was an Oriya.

MEETING WITH AMBICA CHARAN HAZRA :

Madhusudan lived in the hostel of the college, and there he met Ambica Charan Hazra, and they became great friends in life. They shared the same room in the hostel, and both of them were

Hindus. Ambica was married when he was seventeen years of age and his girl-wife was living with her father in his village home. In the hostel there were other students, and all were friendly. Madhusudan had six dear friends, but Ambica was his sworn friend. Many a time in late years he mourned the loss of these friends, all of whom predeceased him and he also recounted tales of college life. He was full of mischief, and with his wit and humour made himself very popular with his comrades. Being intelligent and clever, he was liked by his Professors.

In those days there was a Debating Society in the Bethune College. High Government officials, including High Court Judges, the Commander-in-chief and others used to come and preside over the debates. Madhusudan used to take part in them. Very soon he became the favourite of all as he was a very good debater and a very eloquent extempore speaker. Lord Napier and Mr. Justice Phear used to take a very keen interest in him, and Madhusudan used to go to them whenever he needed advice and guidance. Lord Napier, even after his retirement, used to write to Madhusudan, and send him presents at Christmas. The Bengali boys, who at first had nothing but contempt and ridicule for the young Oriya, soon learnt to respect him.

CHRISTIANITY EMBRACED :

Through these contacts with the high officials and Christian Missionaries, of whom Mr. Duff of the Free Church Institution should be specially mentioned, his mind was gradually drawn towards Christianity. Attending a service conducted by Dr. Duff one Sunday he was highly impressed with the last words of Christ on Cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do", and for days he thought over them and felt that there was something very high and noble in this religion the like of which was not to be found anywhere else, and he expressed his desire to embrace Christianity to the Principal of his college, the Rev. J. P. Aston, at the same time he informed his father writing about it. In those days, conversion to Christianity resulted in being excommunicated from the Hindu society. It meant a complete ostracism from home and relatives. Madhusudan's people grew very anxious over it; and his father came down to Calcutta and tried his best to dissuade Madhusudan from

becoming a Christian. But, once Madhusudan's mind was made up, nothing could induce him to go back from what he had thought right. He and his friend Ambica Charan embraced Christianity, and were baptised on the same day, in the same Church and by the same Paster, in 1869. After he became a Christian, his father stopped his allowance, and Madhusudan had to meet his own expenses for himself as best as he could. With a small grant of Rs.8/- per month from the Mission Fund, he had to defray the cost of college fees, boarding and lodging. Madhusudan was never of a strong constitution, and this hard life in the hostel permanently affected his health.

THE FIRST ORIYA GRADUATE (1870)—

DR. MACNAMARA'S PREDICTION FULFILLED :

Madhusudan was the first Oriya graduate. He passed his B.A. Examination in 1870. Being of a delicate constitution, there was a constant struggle between his mind and his body. It was a standing regret of his life that he never had the chance of writing more than one paper a day to his satisfaction at any examination at the University due to poor health: yet it was strange that he came out with flying colours at every examination. On the last day of the B.A.. Examination he fainted in the Examination Hall as he was suffering from high fever. He had fever for a month. Mr. Aston, Principal of his college, who loved Madhusudan very much, was somewhat of a phrenologist also. He felt Madhusudan's head all over when he came to see him, and then said, "If this boy lives, he will be a great man one day". He then advised that Madhusudan should be removed within 24 hours to a drier climate as otherwise it would be impossible to save his life, and Mr. Aston at once sent Madhusudan to Arrah for a change, bearing the expenses himself. Dr. Macnamara used to send him invalid's diet every week, and took a keen interest in his welfare.

Later in life, when Madhusudan went to England, in 1897, he saw Dr. Macnamara there. He was then a great doctor and phrenologist, and he was highly pleased to find that what he had foretold about Madhusudan had come out true. For who could think in these days that poor Madhusudan, an outcaste from his people, living as an orphan on the charity of the Missionaries, would one day be the leader of his people, the foremost man in his part of the country and a Minister of Government?

REFUSAL TO BECOME A MISSIONARY :

After Madhusudan's graduation, it was Rev. J.P. Aston's wish that he should study Theology, and become a Padree. One day he called Madhusudan to him, and said, "I want you to study theology and be a missionary". Madhusudan had no such intention, and he never believed in religious formalism. Thus addressed by his Principal, who was his friend, philosopher and guide, he was put in a very awkward position. He took time to think over the matter, but he could not persuade himself to take up the life of a paid missionary. He thought that if he would become a missionary of his own accord, he would not take money for it, but would do evangelistic work according to his own ideals. He could not, however, afford such a life at that time on account of his financial position, and if he was to adopt the life of a paid missionary, he felt that very often he might have to sacrifice his conscience in following the routine work of a missionary. He was always very bold and fearless in expressing his convictions, regardless of consequences. He went to Mr. Aston, and expressed his inability to carry out his wishes. Mr. Aston was greatly disappointed and a bit annoyed. When asked why he refused to be a missionary, Madhusudan replied that if he could afford, he would like to be an honorary missionary, and do the work according to his own ideals, but if he were to be a paid missionary he might often have to sacrifice his conscience in the discharge of his routine duty. This he illustrated by saying that there might not be occasions when he might not be in a mood to conduct a service and pray in Church, but, bound by routine, he would have to do it and play the hypocrite. This would be a sacrifice of his conscience, though it might ensure financial affluence and equality of status with an European missionary. Mr. Aston already somewhat annoyed at his refusal, now flew into a rage, and shouted, "you young devil, get out of my presence". "Sir", replied Madhusudan "if this devil lives some years, you will accord him a different reception", and left the London Missionary Society's Institution. These arrogant words, if indeed they were so, were fulfilled. After a few years, when Madhusudan was returned to the Bengal Legislative Council, as the only representative from Orissa and Chota-Nagpur, and came to Calcutta, in 1896, the same Rev. Mr. Aston, who was still the Principal of the L.M.S. College, entertained him at a grand reception at the College, as an ex-student and the first Indian Christian to be elected a member of the Legislative

Council. In those days to be a member of the Legislative Council was very different from what it is in these days. There was only one seat in the Council for the two divisions, Orissa and Chota-Nagpur, and Madhusudan's election to the Council showed that he was the first and foremost man in those divisions.



III

EARLY DAYS OF HIS CAREER

After leaving the L.M.S. Institution, Madhusudan secured the Headmastership of the C.N.S. High School at Mirzapore in 1872, and passed his M.A. Examination from the Free Church Institution in 1873. The then Chief Justice of the High Court of Calcutta appointed him the translator in Oriya of Appeals, in the same year. The post of a Lecturer was vacant at the Serampore College. Madhusudan went to interview the Principal of the College. Principal asked him for testimonials, but Madhusudan calmly said he had none. The Principal then asked him how he could expect to secure a post without a testimonial. Madhusudan replied that he did not think it was necessary for him to get a testimonial as he was there ready to take classes in the Principal's presence, and the Principal would be better able to judge his merit by this than by any formal recommendation. Never in his life, Mahusudan had any letter of recommendation or any testimonial from anyone. It was his sense of dignity not to ask for one. On this occasion he was taken into various classes by the Principal, who asked him to teach different subjects. The Principal, now fully satisfied, asked him when he could commence work. Madhusudan requested him to settle his salary. The College, however, found it impossible to pay him a salary of Rs.300/- per month which he asked for. He could not, therefore, take up the post. He had many ups and downs in his life, during this time.

HEADMASTERSHIP AT GARDEN REACH SCHOOL (1876):

He secured the post of the Headmaster of the Garden Reach School, Kidderpore, Calcutta. He worked very hard, as he had to earn five to six hundred rupees a month. He began, with the special permission of the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, to trans-

late Oriya documents in the morning, during the day he worked as Headmaster in the school, and in the evening attended the Law lectures at Presidency College, and also worked as a private tutor till late in the evening. Under these circumstances he passed his B.L. Examination in 1878. Even during this period, while he was struggling for a living, he used to help poor deserving students with financial and other assistance. At Garden Reach he started a night school for the sons of carpenters, and also helped them financially. Madhusudan started his life as a teacher and all his life he never ceased to teach.

HIS MARRIAGE :

In the year 1873 he was married to a Bengali Christian lady whose name was Soudamini Debi. She lived only five years after the marriage, dying of heart failure in 1878. There was no issue. He felt her death very much and never married again. He regretted that he had no photograph of his wife. He always kept two photographs of the monument of her grave in his bedroom.

MADHUSUDAN AND SIR ASHUTOSH :

During 1877-79 he was in charge of the education of the late Sir Ashutosh Mukherji. Madhusudan and Sir Ashutosh's father were great friends. Doctor Gangaprasad Mukherji consulted Madhusudan about the education of his son and they decided not to send Ashutosh to a school. It was also decided that Madhusudan should help him in his studies, Ashutosh used to go to Madhusudan's house in the evening, and would dine with him and sleep in his house. After dinner Madhusudan used to give him objective lessons in English and corrected his English exercises—the exercise books are still available amongst late Sir Ashutosh's paper. Sir Ashutosh in a public meeting acknowledged Madhusudan as his "Guru" (Preceptor). He introduced Madhusudan to Dr. Suhrawardy in 1924 as his "Guru" and asked him to take an interest in Madhusudan's industrial work. Sir Ashutosh spoke and wrote very chaste English, and once, when Lord Curzon asked him from where he learnt such good English, he took pride in saying that it was from Mr. M.S. Das of Cuttack.

"MODEL QUESTIONS" :

Madhusudan had great command over English language. The want of a prescribed course for the Entrance Examination of the

Calcutta University left the students preparing for the Examination quite in the dark with regard to the type of questions they were going to be asked at the Examination. To remove this difficulty as well as to give the students facilities for mastering the idioms of the English language and the rules of its grammar he printed his "Model Questions", in 1875. His "Model Questions" had an extensive sale, and was of great benefit to the students. It brought over Rs.10,000/- into his pocket, and ran into eight editions.

WELCOME TO AMBICA CHARAN:

In 1873 Ambica Charan brought his Hindu girl-wife, Prasannamoyee, to Madhusudan's house in Calcutta. They came from Ghantal, Midnapur District, which was originally a part of Orissa. Madhusudan took Prasannamoyee to his wife and said, "Here is our daughter who forgot her parents altogether. You will look after her". This "relationship" requires an explanation. It was based on the fact that Madhusudan had assumed the father-in-law-ship of Ambica Charan as a joke by common consent of both the friends since their college days. Prasannamoyee was loved both by Madhusudan and his wife. But Prasannamoyee, who was a Hindu, did not feel happy in a Christian home, and she often used to cry, and would not have her meals prepared by any one there. Soudamini Debi comforted her and took charge of her education. Prasannamoyee stayed at Madhusudan's house for over two years. It was here that the humble compiler of this biography was born and soon became the pet of the family. Prasannamoyee learnt to have faith in the Christian religion and began to understand it. When her little daughter, Shoilabala, was five years old, she and Prasannamoyee were baptised and became Christians. At this time Ambica Charan got a post under the Government of India and went to Simla, and Madhusudan returned to Cuttack, and the friends parted for a long time.



IV

LEGAL CAREER IN CUTTACK

Madhusudan was the first Oriya Vakil to practise at the Cuttack Bar. He was not well received by the Bengali members of the Bar. He was not given a seat in the Bar Library and some of his colleagues treated him with contempt. The District Judge, finding that he was ill-treated by the Bengali fellow-practitioners, gave him a separate room to sit and do his work. Madhusudan did not mind the insults and ill-treatment and practised the spirit of forgiveness, and was confident even at that age that one day they would all have to acknowledge him as the leader of the Bar. He had no communal hatred against the Bengali as a race. Otherwise he could not have married a Bengali girl and adopted a Bengali daughter. He was a born fighter and leader and had great courage and determination. He never bent under an obstacle and being intellectual, assiduous and selfless soon rose to be the leader of the Cuttack Bar. Honesty was his guiding principle, and earned vast sums of money. It may be observed in passing that he gave away for others almost all that he had earned. It was early in his career that he made quite a name for himself in the famous Jagannath Temple Case. In 1887 he was enrolled a Vakil of the Calcutta High Court.

THE FAMOUS JAGANNATH TEMPLE CASE :

In the year 1882 Rani Suryamani Patamohadebi, the mother of Raja Dibyasingh Deb of Puri who was transported for life in 1878, was in trouble with the British Raj about the management of the Jagannath Temple. The Raja had a minor son, Raja Mukunda Deb, under the guardianship of his (Raja Dibyasingha Deb's) mother. He was the Thakur Raja and the Raja of Kurdah, and had precedence over the twenty-six chiefs of the Orissa Gurzats. This son of the transported Raja was, by law and according to family custom, the heir and successor to his private estate, as well as to the office of the Superintendent of the Jagannath Temple; but as he was unable,

owing to his minority and inexperience, to manage that one and perform the duties of the other, his grand-mother was empowered by the British Raj to act as his guardian. The Government wanted to place the management of the temple in the hands of a committee, but the grandmother of Raja Mukunda Deb would not consent to it. This led to institution by the Government of the famous Jagannath Temple case in which the Rani was made the defendant. The Rani sent for Madhusudan, who was then the only practising Oriya Lawyer in Orissa. "My son", said the old lady of ancient royal heritage, "You know the plight we are in. This foreign Sarkar has usurped all our rights, dignities and our rightful authority which we have enjoyed from ancient times. My son has been transported for life. The British Raj is now seeking to take away from us our 'Istadev' Lord Jagannath, whose temple is the object of pilgrimage of all Hindu India. As servants of the Lord and as custodians of His temple we receive the homage of the entire body of Hindus throughout the world. You must come to my rescue and save me and the Hindu community from this pollution of our religion by foreign interference". Madhusudan told her that he understood from official quarters that the Government had no desire to interfere with the actual management of the Temple. They would respect the customs of the temple and the Rani's rights; but the committee was necessary in view of the fact that the Rani was a "purdah" lady. "There is only one answer I can give to that", said the spirited Rani, "if nothing else avails, the Kshatriya lady can still ride on horse back and my old hands can still wield a sword. I shall die fighting for my ancient and sacred rights". The great courage of this old royal lady touched Madhusudan's heart and he could not but bow his head with respect to the Rani. "I shall do my very best for you in the case" said he, "I can say no more than that".

So off, he went to Calcutta to consult the distinguished lawyers of the High Court regarding the merits of his case. They included Sir John Woodroffe and three other eminent members of the Calcutta Bar.

They all heard his case, but were doubtful about the result. "The Rani has no case" was the usual reply of each lawyer he had consulted. Madhusudan himself had been convinced from the start

that the Rani would win. Perplexed, and disappointed, he came back to his hotel and sank into an arm-chair to pass a few most unenviable hours of anxiety and despair. The interest of his client was not the only thing at stake. Far greater issues than that were involved in the outcome of the case. The entire Hindu India had its watchful eyes turned on the matter. Telegram after telegram was pouring into Madhusudan's desk from great Hindu princes, merchants, and others urging him that the case must be fought out, and if the Rani could not finance it, they would only be too glad to be of help. All Orissa was astir with anxiety and expectation. No one, who is not an Oriya, can understand what Lord Jagannath and his Temple mean to Orissa. By now Madhusudan had begun to be looked upon as the champion fighter for the preservation from foreign interference of the great Temple, an institution round which the entire religious, cultural and social life of Orissa had throbbed and pulsated from time immemorial. How could he go back to the people of Orissa, crest-fallen, without victory and with nothing but disappointment on his lips? Last, but not the least, this case meant so much to the career of this young aspirant at the Cuttack Bar who, scarcely then on the first rung of the ladder of his ambition. He had already got his eyes and his heart set on the very top. Madhusudan took count of his thoughts, "Am I wrong or are these great lawyers wrong?" Madhusudan asked himself, 'Or is it merely that I have not made myself clear enough to them? He wanted it to be presented, in order to find the answer to that question. The night passed away and yet Madhusudan had not finished. He got up, bathed, breakfasted, and with a refreshed mind set to work again. At last his long and hard toil came to an end. The writing was done. He had it printed and gave a copy to each of the great lawyers who had been consulted before. When he re-entered the chambers of Sir John Woodroffe three days later he had many misgivings in his heart. But his optimism and tenacity had won at last. "We are sure to win the case, my boy," said Sir John to him, patting him on the back with great enthusiasm and complimenting him on his very intelligent summary and clear presentation. After the case had been decided in the Rani's favour, the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court complimented Sir John Woodroffe on the skill, ability and expedi-

tion with which he had conducted this case involving such intricate points of law. Sir John pulled young Madhusudan out from an obscure seat in the Court room and bringing him before the Judges, declared that it was this young junior to whom the credit was due, the arguments submitted by Sir John were all Madhusudan's. The effect of that statement on the lawyers and others, who had crowded inside the court-room was almost dramatic. Since then Madhusudan was always held in great respect by Sir John Woodroffe as well as other members of the Bar.

The reception which Madhusudan had in Orissa was tremendous. He was hailed as a conquering hero and the saviour of the Jagannath Temple, and when he got down from the palki at Satyavadi, a village in the Puri District of Orissa, he was carried from there to Puri literally on the shoulders of men who mobbed him in vast crowds headed by pandas and sevaks (priests) of the great Jagannath Temple. In this manner he was carried through the streets of Puri town, and though a Christian, even within the precincts of the Temple.

The financial gain to Madhusudan out of this case was very little. The Raj family had been impoverished and could not afford to spend more than a lakh of rupees to cover the entire expense of this intricate case lasting for a considerable period of time., But the abiding gratitude of the Rani, the people of Orissa and the whole Hindu community of India amply compensated him in a measure that money can never do.

Hence forth Madhusudan continued to take an active interest in the affairs of the Temple and the welfare of the Raj family, which lasted till the end of his life.

HIS RELATION WITH THE FEUDATORY CHIEFS :

In those days, the Feudatory States were under the control of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and the Commissioner of Orissa was the Superintendent of those States and the Chiefs consulted Madhusudan in their dealings with the British Raj. Thus, he came to be very closely associated with the Chiefs and was like their father, friend and adviser. All the Chiefs and the Rajas respected him and had implicit faith in his sober wisdom and intellectual ability. They knew that nobody could look after their interest so well as " Madhu

Babu". He was so well versed in the affairs of the Feudatory States of Orissa, and so well conversant with the treaty of rights, position and status of those states that his services were considered invaluable in the preparation of memorials and memoranda which they had to submit to the Government from time to time. This relationship with the Orissan Feudatory States lasted till the end of his life.

He never forgave lack of punctuality. Some of the Chiefs had once made an appointment with him on some important matters concerning their states. They arrived half an hour late, when Madhusudan was engaged in another affair. The Chiefs did not know what to do. At last one of them approached him on behalf of all present. Madhusudan pointed his finger to the clock and said "Raja Sahebs, time would not wait for you. If you needed my service, you should have been punctual for the appointment". The princes had to come another day. Madhusudan was no respecter of persons. Nevertheless his relations with most of the Chiefs of the Feudatory States, especially with Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Khandpara, Talcher, Hindol and Athagarh were most cordial and some of the Chiefs brought their Rani's to visit him, though they kept strict purdah and would not appear before any other male but a relation. The above is a mere glimpse into his relation with the Orissa in Feudatory State. A detailed account of it is beyond the scope of this little sketch of his life.

LAW LECTURESHIP OF THE RAVENSHAW COLLEGE:

When the B.L classes were started in Cuttack, an English Barrister was first appointed as lecturer. The results were not satisfactory and none of the students passed the B.L. Examination. Afterwards, the Government persuaded Madhusudan to take up the Law Lectureship. This he did in 1893 in spite of considerable loss of his income from private practice. The result of his labours was that during the seven years he was a Law Lecturer not a single student who sat for the B.L. Degree failed, and on one occasion one of his students topped the list of successful candidates of the Calcutta University, and in other years they occupied the second or third place in the list.

In 1908, Madhusudan took it into his head that Orissa should

have a Law College of its own at Cuttack and not merely B.L. Classes. He accordingly wrote a letter on the subject to his favourite pupil Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee who was then the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University. The reply of Sir Ashutosh is given below---

Bhowanipur,
12th July, 1908.

My dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for your kind letter, which reached me this morning. Before replying to you, I thought it desirable to speak about it to H.H. The Lieutenant Governor. I had, just, an interview with him and I have explained the whole situation clearly to him. His Honour has agreed and he has authorised me to mention this to you that Orissa will be given Law College well equipped from the University point of view, or if the number of students be very small, special scholarships will be instituted to enable every Oriya student to come to Calcutta and read here. I hope this will be satisfactory to you. So far as I could judge, if the number of students is even moderately large, you will have a Law College, The point, I take it will be which will be cheaper to Government--- to have a Law College, or to have Scholarships of say Rs. 20/- or Rs. 30/- a month each tenable in the Calcutta College by Oriya students. I hope you will now set to work, and get your representation ready. You can reply upon all assistance you require from me. I may add that I had no intention of dragging all the Oriya students to Calcutta. I mentioned Dacca and Bankipore by name, but I added a sentence that it was not inconceivable that there might be Law Colleges in other parts of the province; when I wrote this, I had Orissa in view.

It would be a great thing if you could attend the senate meeting on the 21st (Tuesday, at 5.15 p.m.)...

I am quite well with my family. I hope you are quite well.

Yours affly.,
Ashutosh Mukherjee

V

ADVANCEMENT OF ORISSA NOW HIS DEFINITE AIM

Madhusudan was famous for his hospitality. It was he who entertained the high officials of the Government from the Lieutenant-Governor downwards on behalf of the people of Orissa. His object was to bring Orissa and its people to the notice of the Government. The cost of almost all the Addresses which were presented to them, on behalf of the various organisations, was borne by him. He considered that it was his duty to do this being the first public man of Orissa. He found a state of things which was simply appalling, and was determined to improve matters.

CREATION OF AN ORIYA EXECUTIVE SERVICE :

The then Government of Bengal considered the people of Orissa to be no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water and so strong was their prejudice regarding the intellectual abilities of the Oriyas, that Sir William Grey, the then Lieutenant-Governor and Sir Henry Cotton, the Chief Secretary, found it difficult to believe that Madhusudan himself was an Oriya. To remove this wrong impression about the Oriyas, it was arranged, during the visit of Sir Henry Cotton and Sir Charles Elliot to Orissa, that they should have interviews with some Oriyas. Madhusudan invited Sir Henry Cotton to his house. After the dinner was over, he introduced a few Oriya gentlemen to Sir Henry. The result of the interview was this decision by Government that the Executive Service should be thrown open to the Oriyas and a certain percentage of them should be appointed as Deputy Collector every year. This rule was followed year after year.

APPOINTMENT OF ORIYA MUNSIFFS:

Madhusudan then took up the claim of the Oriya candidates for appointment to the Judicial Service as Munsiffs. In those days a

list of applicants for munsiff-ship was kept in the Calcutta High Court and the applicants were given appointments in the order of their names on the list. The claim of the Oriyas was pressed on the Government by Madhusudan in the Bengal Legislative Council. He pointed out that if appointments were to be given according to the order in the list, the Oriya candidates would stand below four hundred on the existing list and would thus hardly get the chance of an appointment within the minimum age prescribed by the rules. There was some correspondence between the Government and the High Court and the result was that the High Court decided to keep a separate list of Oriya candidates. This was in the late nineties of the last century.

FURTHER PUBLIC SERVICES:

In 1891 he was elected as the first non-official Vice-Chairman of the District Board of Cuttack. In those days this was a great step towards Local Self-Government. The following remarks made by Mr. G. Stevenson, the then Commissioner of the Orissa Division and Chairman of the Cuttack District Board show that Madhusudan was further authorised to exercise all the powers of the Chairman. "I am happy to be in a position to confer on Mr. Das the special powers of the chairman, with which by order No. VI of November 1890 I entrusted the Offg. Joint Magistrate. All these powers in terms of Cuttack District Board Rule No. 49, I authorised him hereby to exercise. Mr. Das will be the first non-official Vice-Chairman of the Board and as this is a great step towards real Local Self-Government, the result will be watched with interest. Knowing Mr. Das as I do, I have every confidence in him, or these powers of the Chairman would not be delegated."

Madhusudan was Vice-Chairman for five years. Regarding the services rendered by Madhusudan during this period Mr. Stevenson made the following observation: "I am greatly indebted to the Vice-Chairman for the lively interests he had taken in his duties during the years he was a Vice-Chairman". Madhusudan resigned from office after five years to make room for other workers.

In 1895 when the late Sir John Woodburn sanctioned the abolition of Oriya as the Court language of the Sambalpur District and substituted Hindi for it, Madhusudan protested and brought the

matter to the notice of the Secretary of State for India. Unfortunately his letter to the Secretary of State for India on this occasion is to be found only in fragments amongst his papers. Here is a little bit out of it:

"At the present moment Marhatta Brahmins form the predominant element in the ministerial staff of the Central Provinces. Every Marhatta Brahmin knows Hindi. The language of the people of Sambalpur, one of the Districts under the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, is Oriya. In the year 1895, the Chief Commissioner recorded a resolution directing the substitution of Hindi for Oriya as the court, revenue and official language of the District..."

Madhusudan sent a copy of his representation to Sir Charles Dilke requesting him to lend the Oriyas the weight of his influence as a leading British statesman, if he thought they had a just cause. Here is a portion from Sir Charles Dilke's reply:

"I fully sympathise with the Oriyas and I shall be glad to have an opportunity of talking the subject over with Lord George Hamilton".

Madhusudan also sent a representation to the Viceroy. An extract from the letter of Lord Curzon's Private Secretary, Sir Walter Lawrence, is given below:

"I entirely sympathise with you on your patriotic hopes regarding Orissa and if I may say so, the Oriyas are to be congratulated on having so able and cultured a champion as yourself". The result of his representation was that Oriya was re-introduced as the court language of Sambalpur.

In 1896 Madhusudan learnt from the Chief Secretary that Government intended to couple Orissa with Burdwan to form a constituency for election of a member to the Bengal Council. He protested to the Chief Secretary that the effect of the step would be practically to exclude Orissa from any representation in the Council. Madhusudan then wrote on the subject to Sir Stuart Bayley (a former Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal), who was a member of the India Council at that time. An extract from Sir Stuart's reply is quoted below:

"I hope that the prospect of doubling up Orissa with one of

the Bengal Divisions for the purpose of representation in the Legislative Council is not likely to be carried out, for it is just the backward outlying provinces, differing in language, race, custom and history from Bengal proper which must require separate representation."

Here, again, through Madhusudan's intervention the Government dropped the proposal. The beef-stall affair of Cuttack in the year 1920 may yet be fresh in the minds of many people in Orissa. It may be remembered that the magistrate of Cuttack passed orders for constructing a beef-stall in the Cuttack Cantonment market. The Hindus objected to it, but the magistrate took no notice of their objection. It was then that Madhusudan, though himself a Christian, intervened on behalf of the Hindus, as he was convinced that their cause was just. It is well known that when the District Magistrate refused to alter his decision in this matter, Madhusudan warned him that if the Government would proceed with the scheme there was bound to be bloodshed, and the first blood to be shed would be that of himself. Early in March 1920 he sent a memorial to Sir Edward Gait, and as a result of his active intervention the order was revoked.

The love and respect of which he was held throughout his life were not confined to any community or class of people. The people of all communities and classes loved him and came to him in their troubles. He sympathised with all and freely spent his money to alleviate their sufferings and was always an active supporter of their cause. He possessed the tenacity of a Roman and the faith of an Israelite. He is known even now from one end of Orissa to the other as "Madhu Babu", the friend of the poor.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS HIS HINDU RELATIONS :

Nor was he, in all these busy years, unmindful of his own relations who were all Hindus. Gopal Ballabh Das was his only brother. He paid for the education of his brother and cleared the huge debt which his father had left. As a devout Christian, he did not forget the fifth Commandment " Honour thy father and thy mother". He felt that because he was a Christian his sacred duty to his relation was abiding, and he showed great assiduity in helping his parents,

brother and sisters so long as they lived. His brother's marriage cost him about forty thousand rupees. He fed sumptuously the people of Cuttack, Puri and Balasore for about a month on this occasion at his Hindu mother's wish. He contributed towards the household expenses of his brother for some years even after his brother began to earn. It speaks volumes for his generosity when we come to think that while his brother left a large sum of money at his death, Madhusudan himself died penniless.

HIS GENEROSITY:

Madhusudan had no greed for gold like a true evangel. He looked upon it as means to an end. He often said that money was meant for circulation and not for hoarding. If it was locked up, its value was lost. It should always be spent for one's country and the cause of humanity. He was a great believer in the fact that God does not allow a hungry sparrow to fall. So he would never let him be in want. This faith was justified on several occasions during his life.

A remarkable instance of his generosity as well as his innate love for the poor people of Orissa is found in the way in which he undertook to contribute Rs.1/13/- towards each of 2,000 applications chiefly from cultivators and poor artisans of Orissa for ten rupee cash certificates. Below is quoted the letter which the then Finance Member of the Government of India wrote to Madhusudan on the matter.

31, Rajapur Road, Delhi,
the 8th November, 1917,

My dear Mr. Das,

I read with great pleasure, in the Controller of Currency's Report on the Load, of your offer to contribute Re.1/13/- each towards the cost of 2,000 applications to our Rs.10/- cash certificates, by cultivators and other people of small means, and I am very glad that the Controller has published this. It affords one more instance of your vivid patriotism, and of the way in which you act, quietly and unostentatiously, while other legislators talk.

I hope all is going on well with you. I have lately arrived here and am exceedingly busy at present over many matters which will arise in connection with Mr Montagu's visit.

Yours very sincerely,
(Illegible)

ADOPTION OF SHOILA BALA DAS :

In 1889 he went to Calcutta where he met his old friend Ambica Charan. The two friends had not met for some years, as Ambica Charan worked under the Government of India and Madhusudan left Calcutta. Being a widower and having no child of his own, Madhusudan took an interest in Ambica's children. He had a special liking for his eldest daughter, Shoila Bala. He took interest in her education and sent her to Bethune College, Calcutta. In 1891 Prasannamoyee, Ambica Charan's wife became ill and Madhusudan brought her to Cuttack for a change. After Prasannamoyee's death in Calcutta, Shoila Bala and her sister and three brothers came to stay with him at Cuttack in 1893. While their father was at Simla, Madhusudan educated almost all the children of his dear friend. He took special interest in the two sisters, Shoila Bala and Sudhansu Bala, and the second son, Chandra Kumar. Chandra Kumar was sent to England by Madhusudan and became a Barrister-at-Law. He always loved and respected Madhusudan and was of assistance to him in his old age. Shoila Bala was his right hand in his public activities. She was adopted as his daughter, and given the surname 'Das' since then she was known as Madhu Babu's daughter---'Miss Das'. Madhusudan saw ahead the difficulties of working for the education of the women of Orissa without the help and co-operation of a woman and Shoila Bala helped him to fulfil his mission. She had also to act as hostess on the frequent occasions when Madhusudan entertained high officials. People often met in his house to discuss matters of public importance and Shoila Bala not only had free access to these meetings but Madhusudan encouraged her to take part in the discussions. Shoila Bala's sister, Sudhansu Bala, also lived at his home, and was also educated under his direction, but she retained her own surname.

FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND :

He was always in bad health and from his college days to the end of his life, he was not free from illness even for a day. His illness was ulceration of the duodenum, which gave him perpetual trouble. Throughout his life he lived on strictly regulated diet, which was very simple, and mostly in liquid form. It was only through the exercise of extreme care and a thorough understanding of his constitution that he was able to doctor himself to the ripe old age of 86 years. Sir Nilratan Sircar was his medical advisor in Calcutta and he had great confidence in Madhusudan's understanding of his own physiology and left the question of dietetic to Madhusudan himself. In 1897 he became very ill and the doctors in Calcutta told him that he was suffering from appendicitis. Operations for appendicitis were unknown in India at that time and he was advised by his doctors to go to England for the operation. Accordingly he went to England in April, 1897 to consult Sir Lauder Brunton, the great specialist in intestinal disease. Sir Lauder examined him and said that Madhusudan was one of the wonders of the world as he had never seen a single case in which a patient had continued to live with such a serious condition of the duodenum. He only lived through starving himself. He ate hardly anything and for about six months lived only on Mellion' Food. In the latter part of his life he practically lived on hot water and salt and on such solid food as puffed rice (khoi). Many doctors thought that this extreme regulation and moderation in diet was the reason why even in his old age he had such a clear brain and could work for such long hours without fatigue.

While he was in England, he saw Sir George Hamilton, at that time the Secretary of State for India, and it was owing to Madhusudan's taking up the cause of Orissa there, that the name of Orissa was heard for the first time by many members of the British Parliament. He received some letters, from Sir George Hamilton and other eminent Englishmen, pertaining to the period.

He also visited at his country-house the aged Mr. Ravenshaw, the popular Commissioner of Orissa. Mr. Ravenshaw had tears in his eyes when he embraced his old friend Madhusudan and told him that he had long wished to see an Oriya like him in England. Mr. Ravenshaw celebrated the occasion by showing him the 'Pika' (cigar) of Orissa which he had long kept in store. He talked to

Madhusudan about Orissa and her affairs and of his old friends whom he remembered well even then.

Neither did Madhusudan forget to visit his old Principal Rev.J.P.Aston at Hastings. Mr.Aston was very pleased to see him and took pride in introducing Madhusudan to his Missionary friends. At a large gathering at Hastings, Madhusudan was asked by Mr.Aston to deliver an address on the Mission work in India.



VI

HIS EFFORTS FOR THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ORISSA.

While Madhusudan was in England, he visited the large industrial towns, to study methods of manufacture. He was convinced that his country could never progress unless its industries were developed and he never spared himself any expense from his hard earned money for the industrial development of Orissa.

THE ORISSA ARTS WARES:

After his return from England he started a workshop on a small scale for the better manufacture of silver and gold filigree work for which Cuttack is famous throughout the world. Nowhere in the world silver and goldsmiths make such fine filigree work but as an industry it was in a moribund condition. In order to revive the old art he spent considerable sums of money for teaching the Cuttack artisans to improve their craft. The filigree work, upon which the name and fame of Cuttack greatly depended in the past, was reorganised by the efforts of Madhusudan and brought to such excellence that it earned many appreciations from England and elsewhere in addition to admiration and praise at home. The small concern soon became a big centre of production where 150 worked daily in a special workshop erected within the compound of his house at Cuttack. He brought workmen from all over India to teach the Oriya workmen such arts in which they were found deficient. His factory was called the "Orissa Art Wares". Here in his workshop he started many other kinds of industries such as sola work, horn, and ivory work, cabinet making and other kinds of wood work, brass, gold silver and aluminium work, and turned out beautiful products. Any good thing that he saw anywhere, he tried to manufacture in his workshop and the result was a band of highly trained workmen, who could stand comparison with their conferrers in the same branch

anywhere else. The cost of production was immaterial to him. He became the master artisan himself and taught his workmen. To produce cotton cloth he cultivated the cotton plant in his garden. The cotton from these plants was made into yarn and woven into cloth in his own factory. Various kinds of hand-loom were brought from various places in India, and even from Japan, and hand-woven cloth was manufactured in his factory as early as 1902. He always valued Swadeshi things and encouraged them, but his country had not then been ready to understand his ideals and co-operate with him. He had to fight the great battle of competing with cheap machine-made goods of the West all alone and single-handed, at great financial loss to himself. Sometimes he used to be adversely criticised, but he was not a man to yield to irresponsible criticism.

He designed most exquisite things in gold, silver and aluminium and sent them to Calcutta and other countries for sale. They fetched good prices, but the profits went not into his own pocket but into the middleman's. His object was not any gain for himself but the improvement of the technique of the workmen so that the art might be revived and the artisans be able to better their position. In a short time Madhusudan created a name in the world of art, and his silver wares were highly admired in many European countries. The fame of the 'Orissa Art Wares' spread far and wide. Madhusudan presented many British officers in India with the beautiful products of his art works just to bring the artistry of Orissa to the notice of their country. He spent a lot of money for this purpose. Sir William Wedderburn M.P., Sir George Hamilton, Lord Morley, Sir Walter Lawrence, Sir Albert Soicer, James Burdillon, Sir Charles Elliot, Sir Henry Cotton and many other British officials and Indians spoke very highly of Madhusudan's Art Wares. Those who received the presents from him always valued them more as mementoes than as gifts and wrote to him in words of high appreciation of the glory of Orissan Art.

Madhusudan had never been into an art school, yet his success in this direction was marvellous. At first he engaged a few men, watched how they worked and when he had learnt their methods, he set himself to introduce improvements to cheapen labour, secure better finish and new processes of manufacture and adapt the products to modern requirements.

SIR JOHN WOODBURN'S VISIT TO ORISSA ART WARES:

Madhusudan had a long discussion with Sir John Woodburn, regarding the recognition of the artisan class, by conferring some sort of honour or title on them. He added that the artisan class had never got an opportunity of coming before their Lieutenant-Governor, though the fruit of their labour was always being presented to his honour by other classes of people. Madhusudan invited His Honour to pay a visit to his workshop. His Honour mentioned in his speech that he came to Orissa to visit two things, namely old art—the temple of Bhubaneswar, and the new art—Mr. Das's Industry. It was on the 20th of August, 1902 that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir John Woodburn, visited the Orissa Art Wares. The workmen presented an address in Oriya, written up on palm leaf artistically, ornamented and enclosed in a silver casket of excellent make, bearing the figure in miniature of the Bhubaneswar Temple. They expressed their sincere gratitude to Sir John Woodburn for his great kindness in receiving their address, and expressed their hope for help and encouragement at the hands of the Government. His Honour made a kind and sympathetic reply which he asked Madhusudan to interpret in Oriya. Sir John said that of all the gifts he had ever received, he considered the one offered by these humble workmen the most precious. As he was going to hold his office only for a few months longer, he was not in a position to do anything that would elevate them to wealth and eminence but he would certainly not forget to recommend their case to his successor. He would talk to the Viceroy about the matter and hoped that after him, other people in authority might visit the institution and show their sympathy. His Honour then went round and inspected the articles manufactured by the workmen, and observed with great care and interest their processes of working, the ingenious method of drawing out very fine wire, the flawless stone-setting and other works of skill and art. He handled their simple tools and implements to their great delight and shook hands with each of them with a smile on his face.

PRESS APPRECIATION :

The "Amrita Bazar Patrika" of Calcutta wrote on March 19, 1901: "We know the Hon'ble Mr. M. S. Das as a member of the Bengal Council and a leading pleader of Cuttack, but it is not generally

known that he is a man of the highest genius. During his travels in Europe he was very forcibly impressed with the idea that India could be raised by Industry alone. It also occurred to him that unless educated men stepped forward and took an active interest, the profitable industries of this country for which India was once famous, would die out or pass into the hands of the people of the West. We have always held that if we have the will, we can work out our salvation to a large extent by our own exertion. Mr. Das had found out another cause which has killed the native Indian industries, and it was that preference was frequently found to be given to Europe-made articles over Indian products made by Indians themselves and the reason was not far to seek. While in other countries the services of the best intellects are obtainable in the Industrial pursuits, in India it is only the men belonging to the professional castes, who are generally illiterate, that follow them. Consequently the things turned out by Indian workmen have in many cases no fine finish and are wanting in variety of design. These drawbacks, however, Mr. Das has sought to remove in the case of various fancy wares of gold and silver. Mr. Das is determined to do something to improve the local industries of Orissa. We may, however, en passant say that Mr. Das has set a very noble example by opening out to the gaze of our educated countrymen new fields of enterprise which have hitherto been uncared for, and showing one of the best and perhaps the only possible method of improving the natural resources of India".

The "Bengali" of Calcutta wrote: "The example of our Hon'ble friend Mr. Das of Cuttack ought to be followed everywhere for the revival and development of industries. He is now engaged in this work, winning golden opinion for himself and nobly helping forward the development of industries in this province".

Such were the "golden opinions" of the public, Officials as well as non-officials had great appreciation for his work. But all the good opinion of the public and the appreciation of officials could not help the Orissa Art Wares to survive. After the loss of about a lakh of rupees, Madhusudan was obliged to close his workshop. The artisans of Cuttack, who were taught in his workshop, carried on the trade, and people outside Orissa are reaping the benefit of his great

experiment and enterprise. There have now sprung up half a dozen silver and gold smith's workshops at Cuttack, which are owned by Sindhis and Marwaris who have engaged Madhusudan's workmen, and his original and exquisite designs are still in great demand. Indian society ladies are patronising fine silver filigree wares and jewellery which are sent out from Orissa all over India. In other countries of the world also the pioneer has had to suffer for his work while others profit by his costly experiences. The spheres of Madhusudan's service to the motherland knew no bounds. Not satisfied with what he performed himself, he used to help and support other workers in the public cause, financially and otherwise, whenever occasion arose, in his own characteristic quiet manner, unknown to others and a little later forgotten even by himself. It is impossible to give a faithful account of this type of work performed during his life time. Had not his tenacious secrecy precluded all chances of access to information in this regard, the occasions themselves would be too numerous to mention. The following letter of the 25th Dec, 1904 from Mr.K.C.Roy-Choudhury, Editor of the "Star of Utkal", then the only English weekly newspaper of Orissa, gives us just a little glimpse into that carefully guarded corner of his life.

"Dear Mr.Das,

You have simply overwhelmed me. I never did any private service to you. You are sacrificing everything in the service of the country. In the noble cause I have helped you with a little physical labour. For this I deserved nothing, and you should not have paid me anything. But the way you have put it disarms all opposition. Perhaps you understood that, but for such help I should be compelled to work for myself in an ignoble sphere. I bow down to you. As God gives the breath to keep up my life, I look upon your gifts as a help to persevere in the service of the country. My heart is full with your kindness; heart's blood has rushed to my head, I cannot think coolly just now and you will pardon if I fail to express myself satisfactorily "May God bless you".

Yours sincerely,

"K.C. Roy-Choudhury"

MANSINGHPATNA DACOITY CASE :

It has already been said that the Orissa Art Wares landed Madhusudan in the loss of a lakh of rupees. The loss was in fact much more serious than that. The Orissa Art Wares brought him trouble from unexpected quarters. A dacoity was committed at a house in Mansinghpattna at Cuttack, in which fire arms were used, several inmates were wounded and the robbers escaped with gold and silver worth several thousand rupees. The whole town was so overwhelmed with anxiety and fear regarding the security of life and property that Madhusudan had to press the Superintendent of Police to do his utmost to end such a state of panic. The police disliked his interference, but realising Madhusudan's importance as a citizen and fearing his great fighting courage, arrested a batch of Oriya men under suspicion and informed him that the dacoits had already been under arrest. Madhusudan believed that the arrested men were innocent and that the dacoity had been committed by men living outside Orissa. With his usual zeal for the cause of the unjustly harrassed poor, Madhusudan took up their defence without any fees. There upon the police got a chance of reporting confidentially to the Government, through the then Commissioner, Mr.K.G.Gupta, that Madhusudan had been a receiver of stolen gold and silver from the dacoits which he had melted at his factory; otherwise he would not have pleaded on behalf of the thieves and dacoits free of charge. Madhusudan came to hear of this report privately. The accused were, to Madhusudan's great disappointment and annoyance, all convicted and sentenced to transportation for life. He set out to vindicate his honour and the innocence of the accused. He wrote to the Government of Bengal requesting that a fresh enquiry should be instituted regarding his conduct and the conduct of the police officers. Mr.Carlyle was sent by the Government of Bengal to enquire into the matter and on his return to Bengal he submitted a report upon which the Government was satisfied about the falsity of the aspersions cast on Madhusudan's conduct by the police. Madhusudan was assured that the Government's confidence in him remained unshaken. In the meanwhile fresh proofs regarding the dacoity case were discovered in Calcutta, and satisfied as to the innocence of the accused of the Mansighpatna Dacoity case, the Government

unconditionally released them from the Andamans. Very few records of a similar strenuous fight for the vindication of justice in upholding the cause of the innocent and the oppressed could be found in the annals of British rule in India. This one case alone proves the fighting quality of the great man .

THE UTKAL TANNERY :

In 1904 Madhusudan set his heart on developing the leather industry in Orissa. He saw that raw hides were exported in larger quantities from Orissa to Calcutta and from there to England and France, and that they came back to India in the form of finished leather, thus involving a lot of loss to Orissa in the shape of workmen's wages. He started a Tannery in order to remedy this state of things. At first it was worked on an experimental basis in his residential house at Cuttack. Shortly afterwards it was transferred to his garden house at Chauliaganj, where all classes of highly finished leather goods were turned out in large quantities from hides and skins collected mostly from the surrounding Garjat States. He carried on experiments and succeeded in utilizing local materials for tanning purposes, to the best advantage. He imported expensive and up-to-date machinery from Europe, both from foreign countries as well as from different parts of India, for training local men in the different processes of manufacturing, at a huge cost. He sent Shoila Bala's youngest brother Mr. J.C. Hazra, who having learnt the technique at the Utkal Tannery was managing the factory, to England and other European countries for a thorough training in the leather industry. Nearly 300 workmen were employed daily in the factory and the business grew steadily in importance. The manufactured products, specially the well known "Lizard skins" which originated there, found their way even to foreign markets where they fetched high prices. Apart from tanning, the factory turned out beautiful bags, trunks, suit cases, and boots and shoes and supplied accoutrements to the Police Department of the Government of Bengal as well as to Posts and Telegraph Department of the Government of India on contract. He had the Tannery in hand for nearly a quarter of a century and loved it like his own child. Nearly all his earnings went to maintain the Tannery. The establishment of this pioneer industry in Orissa

cost him a fortune and financial ruin. He mortgaged his house, the Tannery and his all, and yet he could not meet the demands of the Tannery. Its fame had reached England, Europe and Japan but, unfortunately, the fame alone could not make the Tannery live. Mahatma Gandhi attached a double importance to the Tannery when he pointed out that over and above being a great industrial enterprise, the Tannery was a practical step towards solving the problem of untouchability. Here is what Mahatma Gandhi said in one of his statements to the Associated Press in 1932.

"Madhusudan Das was (Mahatmajee took it that Madhusudan was no longer alive) a great Philanthropist and had himself learnt the modern process of tanning, had prepared statistics to show what the country was losing annually owing to the superstition of untouchability, masquerading under the name of religion. Harijan workers can learn the method and acquaint the tanners with it in so far as it is practicable".

Mr.B.M.Das, Superintendent, Calcutta Research Tannery, in his report on the Utkal Tannery, writes—"It is beyond all contradiction that in starting tanning, boot and shoe making, and the manufacture of such leather goods as bags, suitcases, saddlery, etc, on a regular factory scale, and by the employment of modern western methods and machinery, the Utkal Tannery of Cuttack was the first in the province of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. A mint of money had been spent, and years of devoted labour given by the proprietor, in pioneering the industry. After all this, it is now a satisfaction to find that much of the spadework is done. Workable manufacturing process has evolved out of his sustained efforts; experts and labour have been trained, articles are being manufactured whose demand is now more than the supply; and above all, a reputation has been created for the Tannery, and public confidence has been inspired as to the capacity of the Tannery to maintain the excellence of the product."

Two other letters to the same effect might also be quoted here :

Government House, Patna

January 17th, 1922.

I have, at various times during the last few years, had business with the Utkal Tannery of Cuttack, chiefly in connection with light fancy work such as the dyeing and tanning of snake and lizard skins, for ladies belts, shoes, bags, etc. I have invariably been

satisfied with the result. The skins have been greatly appreciated as presents, and the gift of one has almost invariably led to an order for more.

H. LeMesurier.

(Acting Governor, Bihar & Orissa)

To

The Hon'ble Mr. Madhusudan Das, C.I.E.

Dear Mr. Das,

I take this opportunity to say that I have always been much interested in your efforts to develop the industries of Orissa, and in particular, in the tannery which you have established at Cuttack, which will, I hope, develop into a really successful undertaking. I have as you know, ordered several things from there for myself, and the articles supplied have invariably given satisfaction.

Yours very truly,

E.A. Gait,

(Lieutenant Governor, B. &

O.)

We shall see later on that for this Tannery he was ruined, and became penniless in his old age. He had to place all his properties and possessions at the disposal of the court, and to declare himself insolvent. He bore his adversity like a saint unaffected by worldly good or evil and never forgot his self-respect and honour. The spirit of self-will and faith in God kept him up in the last years of his life. Only once did he show his weakness for the Tannery, and that was on the morning it was auctioned. He lay unconscious for eight hours, and when he regained his senses, he only said "Oh God, Thy will be done", and never again spoke about the Tannery. It was like the death of a pet child to him.



VII

HIS WORK FOR A UNITED ORIYA RACE

Early in the present century, Madhusudan began to realise that unless the Oriyas, inhabiting all the provinces into which they had been scattered for the purpose of administrative convenience, were united their culture and identity would be lost. Besides, the Oriyas had all along been in a weaker position with respect to other people in the respective provinces on account of their being in a minority in each. On this account they not only lost in material respects but had also to suffer constant humiliation. Their prestige in India as a whole had also suffered because of this. Madhusudan realised only too well that his people would not make any progress until all the Oriya-speaking-tracts were brought under one administration. In the words of Madhusudan himself, spoken at the time of the creation of the new province of Bihar and Orissa, "Orissa is like a football, kicked to and fro at the will of fate". It was his life's ambition to see the Oriya people brought together under one administration. After years of unceasing labour and agitation, Madhusudan was able to know just before he died that his dreams had at last been realised. But God had taken him away to Himself before the new Orissa province actually came into being.

THE UTKAL POSTERS :

In order to bring his countrymen's grievances to the notice of the Government, Madhusudan used to set up large coloured paintings and posters, showing a dismembered nation's plight, at garden parties or other public functions at his house. Most realistically depicted, these were intended to be constant reminders to the Government of the injustice and hardship caused to the Oriyas by Government's administrative grouping regardless of race, culture, history, associations and other considerations, like convenience and efficiency.

Of the two illustrations reproduced in this chapter out of his numerous creations, one reprints the vivisection of the Oriya speak-

ing country, the members of whose body are disjointed and appropriated by the several neighbouring provinces. The other shows that Ganjam, the daughter of Orissa, is in exile, and Mother Utkal is separated by the Gulf of administration from her daughter who wishes to come back to the mother, but is helpless. These pictorial symbolic representations told a story more powerfully than any thing else.

WHY MADHUSUDAN LEFT THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS :

Madhusudan was originally a member of Indian National Congress. He shared his countrymen's aspirations for Indian Swaraj. But from the very start his "modus operandi" was the very opposite of that selected by the leaders and workers of the Congress. He believed in working from the mass upwards. Whereas the Congress in the past had mostly worked amongst the so called intelligentsia. He considered it more important to facilitate the regeneration of the spheres of activity than to talk glibly about the uplift of the entire Indian nation. He believed that efficient reorganisation of the condition of the masses was a necessary prelude to the growth of vigorous all-India nationalism. Without the attainment of this object the relation of self-government for India seemed to him to be meaningless. It may be observed in passing that the adoption in the current Congress programme of measures to secure mass contact, organisation of the Kisans and other bodies into efficient units, rural uplift and removal of untouchability indicates how Madhusudan was right in his almost dogmatic faith in the reorganisation of the masses.

The difference of opinion regarding the method of conducting political work in India resulted ultimately in his secession from membership of the Indian National Congress and the inauguration by him of the Utkal Union Conference. It was a characteristic of Madhusudan to prove to those, that disagreed with him the correctness of his view, by putting them to the test of actual operation. The Utkal Union Conference was started partly to fulfil this purpose also.

THE UTKAL UNION CONFERENCE :

The "Conference" held its first session at Cuttack during December 1903. This was the first occasion in which, in India the vernacular of a province was used in a Provincial Conference. His daughter Shoila Bala was his right hand at this time, and helped him

in organising the Conference. She started a volunteer corps in which five hundred students joined to serve their motherland. The Captain of the volunteers, corps was the late Babu Sashi Bhusan Satpathy, Deputy Magistrate, who worked under Shoila Bala's direction. The first Industrial and Agricultural exhibition of Orissa was organised and held at Cuttack along with the conference. Delegates from all Oriya-speaking tracts came to Cuttack to attend the conference and were Madhusudan's guests. The delegates were the Rajas of Feudatory States as well as other important persons. He spent almost a fortune on the Conference, rousing the dormant national consciousness of the Oriyas. The conference did yeoman's service in creating a national outlook amongst the Oriyas.

The late Maharaja Sri Ramachandra Bhunj Deo of Mayurbhunj presided over the Conference and almost all the feudatory chiefs of Orissa attended it. That was the first and the last "One Man's Show", as some of the Bengal papers described the conference. The other sessions of the Conference that followed year after year were taken charge of by the people of the various localities where they were held. The success of the Conference convinced the people that when a selfless man with his country's interest at heart, sets to work with a will he can achieve a triumph not only personal but national. The fire thus kindled by Madhusudan in the hearts of these people never died out. The Conference was a roaring success. The powerful speeches of Madhusudan and his personal contact with the people from different parts of the Oriya speaking country and of different stations in life brought them on a common platform of brotherhood which had been unknown in the past.

PRESS COMMENTS :

The late Editor of the "Amrita Bazar Patrika" Babu Motilal Ghose, was present at this unique gathering of the Oriya people, and paid enthusiastic compliments to Madhusudan on the great success of the Conference. He had no idea that the Oriya people could get up such a show and create a precedent for India. Speaking of Madhusudan the "Amrita Bazar Patrika" observed, "It is a problem how he, being only a "District Pleader", (he afterwards became an Advocate) could command such influence. It is because of his character. Though a Christian by faith, he is absolutely trusted and re-

spected by both the Musalmans and the Hindus. He is a man of strong mind, positive in the extreme, and always has his own way of doing things. But everyone knows that he is thoroughly honest, unselfish and philanthropic in his tendencies. He apparently coins confidence for everyone.

The "New India" said as follows regarding the work of the Conference in 1904. "However much one may feel impelled to disapprove, or even feel somewhat suspicious of some of the aspects of the work in which Babu Madhusudan Das has for some years past been engaged for the consolidation and elevation of the Oriya-speaking population, it would be absolutely unjust to deny that his is, perhaps, the only movement, at least on this side of India, which has been seeking to ally itself directly with the masses of our people. The Utkal Conference is only about a year old, and it is surprising to learn that already the nucleus of a powerful and widespread organisation extending itself to the remotest and most obscure village of the Province, has been formed; and a good deal of excellent work is being quietly done by the agents and itinerant missionaries of the Conference from day to day. An important mass meeting, held at Puri on Sunday last, resolved to boycott to some extent, the Marwari traders of the country who would give any special preference to foreign imported articles in their trade with the people. All this shows how the Swadeshi movement, which is practically confined among us, to a very small section of the middle class, has permeated more or less, in Orissa, among the masses, and this is due we think, very largely to the labour of Babu Madhusudan Das, and is one of the earliest fruits of the Utkal Conference, of which he is the very life and soul."

"Unlike our own Provincial Conference, the proceedings of which are mainly conducted in a language which only one in a hundred thousand of the masses of the people perhaps understands, those of the Utkal Conference were conducted throughout in the vernacular of the Province, thus its aims and objects could be far more readily understood by the man in the street, than has hitherto been possible in the case of the Bengal Provincial Conference."

"Nor has the Conference suffered in any way, it seems to us, by keeping itself aloof from our present-day mendicant politics. If

the Utkal Conference helps to spread bold ideas among the people on important economic questions, and organises means for the spread of education, both literary and technical, among the masses of the population of the province, it would have done for more solid work, it seems to us that has ever so far been attempted by any of the larger and far more pretentious movements in the country."

A CRISIS TO THE CONFERENCE :

Just five days before the Conference began, all the members of the Executive Committee who were Government officials suddenly resigned. Madhusudan was astonished at the attitude of the Government officers, but he found out that this was due to a circular by the Commissioner of Orissa forbidding the Government officers to take part in the Conference. The Committee felt that unless Madhusudan did something, the whole conference would be a failure, as in view of the Commissioner's attitude the Feudatory Chiefs would be prevented from attending the Conference. A long telegram containing all the resolutions which were to be moved at the Conference was sent to the Lieutenant-Governor at Calcutta by Madhusudan with his comments on the attitude of the Commissioner. In reply, the Government asked the Commissioner to explain to Madhusudan that the Government has full sympathy with that great Oriya movement, and asked the Commissioner to be present at the Conference as the Government's representative. Thus the cloud which had threatened a great storm vanished, and everything passed off smoothly. The Commissioner attended the Conference daily and opened the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibitions of the Conference.

THE CONFERENCE PUGREE:

All the delegates including the President, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj, wore a special head-dress designed by Madhusudan-- a pale pink silk pugree which was meant to be a symbol of their unity. He had brought the masses into the Conference, and also the artisans of Orissa, one and all, rich and poor, landlords and tenants, the learned and the unlettered, sat on the same platform of same quality irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Madhusudan himself loved to sit on the floor with all classes of people around him. The spirit permeating the old Conference has now almost ceased to flow in the political activities of Orissa. A newer spirit flows in its

place. Opinions naturally differ as to the superiority of the one course to the other with reference to the needs of the present. This, however, is perhaps to be regretted on all hands that the classless unity which Madhusudan sought to achieve has now to some extent been shaken. It pained the inmost heart of the great founder of the Utkal Union Conference to note during his last days that the later sessions of the Conference were losing sight of this unique character and purpose of its existence.

Madhusudan thought half a century in advance of his time. He was like a tall oak, towering above all other trees in personal grandeur. He started to work single handed, without the benefit of the co-operation of his fellowmen for the realisation of the dream of his life---the regeneration of Orissa by means of industrial development and the growth of a national life. Some of his best friends in other provinces called him a "Freak of Nature". Had he been born in Bengal or some other province more advanced than Orissa, he might have been more fortunate as to his comrades-in-arms. Born to all the handicaps he had to bear in Orissa, he never let the man in him give into the obstacles, he had to encounter throughout his life. Madhusudan fought the battle of the pioneer all alone.



VIII

HIS WORKS FOR WIDER RECOGNITION TO ORISSA

CONFERMENT OF THE TITLE--- C.I.E. :

As we have already seen a great Oriya had been at work to make the influence of Orissa felt in a wider sphere. In the new year of 1904 the Government conferred on Madhusudan the title of "Companion of the Indian Empire". The whole of Orissa was pleased to see their leader decorated with the title. But Madhusudan expressed a desire not to accept the title, for he said that anything he had done was not for the Government, but he had done only what he thought was his duty to his country. He valued the appreciation of his country for more than a title from the Government. He was never anxious for any honour and always advised his daughter to follow his example. He sought advice from his friends, official as well as non-official, on the question of accepting the title and they all asked him not to refuse it, for he was the first Oriya to receive the C.I.E. title and he must retain it for the sake of his country. The people of Cuttack met in a great public meeting to celebrate the occasion. They sat on the ground with Madhu Babu in their midst. He was lavishly garlanded. Representatives of every community paid high tributes to his work for the country. It was a most impressive scene. Mrs. Sarala Devi Choudhurani of Bengal who was present at this large gathering could not but be struck by the devotion and love of the people for Madhusudan. She told his daughter Shoila Bala that she must be feeling proud of her father and his achievements and that she (Sarala Devi) herself was proud to have the privilege of knowing Madhusudan and being his guest.

MADHUSUDAN, A FINE CHRISTIAN :

Madhusudan was the President of the All-India Christian Conference for three successive years from 1915 to 1917. His

speeches were remarkable and they afforded an insight into his character and genius. As President of All-India Christian Conference in the year 1916, he led a deputation of the Indian Christians from India and Burma to present an address of welcome to the Viceroy of India for the first time.

In 1918 Madhusudan invited the All-India Christian Conference to Cuttack and bore himself all the expenses of the Conference and of extending his hospitality to all the delegates. He was a devout Christian and practised forgiveness in daily life, but he never thrust his religion on non-Christians. Those who saw how he associated with people of every religion, thought he was not a staunch Christian, but this liberality of outlook and respect and fellow feeling for all just proved him to be one. His Christianity was not dogmatic or ecclesiastical. While at Cuttack he used to worship at the Baptist Mission Chapel. At the request of the Mother Superior of the Roman Catholic Convent at Cuttack, Madhusudan presented a piano to the convent school for the orphan children. The chaplain of the Baptist chapel complained to Madhusudan that this was not in keeping with his Christian creed. Madhusudan replied that Christianity consists in doing service for a good and deserving cause where ever such service is needed. His faith, as he often said, was founded upon heartfelt admiration for Christ's prayer during his crucifixion "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do". To illustrate this more fully, an incident may be narrated.

A certain man has tried to injure his reputation by saying many slanderous things against him. One day, when he was in his office at about 8 O'clock in the evening, some pleaders who had brought a few clients with them told him that the man in question, his worst enemy, was in trouble, as his son had been arrested on a charge of murder. They thought Madhusudan would be pleased to hear that news, but to their great surprise, he immediately wanted to go and see that man to find out whether he could be of any assistance to his son. The coachman, he was told, had gone home for the evening. But Madhusudan made the journey on foot. Having reached his house, Madhusudan scolded him for not coming to him in his trouble. At this, the man fell down at his feet and wept like a child saying that owing to his own conduct towards Madhusudan, he did not dare to

show his face to one whom he had so wrongly maligned. Madhusudan told him not to think about the past but to come with him and explain to him the trouble. Thus forgiveness got the better of wickedness. Madhusudan made God his daily companion and he had the firm faith that his Heavenly Father would help and guide him.

He was a great friend of the needy and the destitute. All through his life on every Sunday, Madhusudan distributed alms to the poor and the needy. He thought that they had a right to his alms. Even though he himself had become poor, he still loved to give away money in charity. A remarkable incident happened one day when, later in life Madhusudan himself, had no money. A poor man asked for alms. Madhusudan opened his cashbox and found no money there to give to the man. He told him that he himself was penniless. The man would not believe this and followed Madhusudan around the garden with the hope of getting something. As if by habit Madhusudan searched his pockets, though quite sure that there was nothing in them. He seemed to touch a bit of paper in one of his vest pockets. Pulling it out he discovered to his great surprise and delight that it was a Government currency note for ten rupees. "This was meant for you", he said to the poor man and gave it to him. Madhusudan believed that God knew his great sorrow in not being able to give away any more and gave him this money for charity. What his right hand gave his left hand did not know. It must be a pleasing memory for many a poor man of Cuttack till today how every New-Year's Day brought for them princely dishes of rare delicacies at the place of 'Madhu Babu', and how he used to stand by, and look after their feeding like their father.

Christianity to him was a living faith and conversion to Christianity or to one of it's creed based on anything but a person's inner conviction was opposed to his ideals. When he was in Garden Reach in Calcutta, one evening one clergyman friend of his, came to him with a story of his troubles. The clergyman belonged to the Anglican Church. His tale of woe was that some people whom he had converted to Christianity were taken away by a Roman Catholic priest on payment of money from his church which was in the vicinity of the Anglican Church, to become Catholics. This clergyman did not know what to do as all his work in the mission thus came to

nothing. Hearing his sad story Madhusudan told him that he should pay twice the money that was paid by the Roman Catholic priest and take the people away from that church. The clergyman said he wished he had some money to offer so that he could bring them back. Madhusudan promised to help him with the requisite funds to the great delight of the clergyman. But he would do so only on one condition. The condition was that each man would be paid to become a Mohammedan. The clergyman was horrified and asked Madhusudan how he being a Christian could utter such a thing. Madhusudan replied that being a Christian himself he was all the more justified in saying so. He did not believe in increasing the number of Christians by admitting into it's fold persons whose conversion was a matter not of faith and conviction but of pecuniary gain.

Madhusudan was a selfless and self-made man. He worked very hard and never had any rest from his toil. He used to say that he would die 'in harness', and so he did. He used to commence work in his office in the morning and continue it till 12 p.m. with a short respite at noon. Even in the hottest part of the day he would keep the doors open and work in his office. He could stand hardship well even in his old age and he never shirked his duties. Every night there was a gathering of friend, clients, and pleaders in his office, and he would talk to them regarding his work and the topics of the day, impressing on them their duty to their country in his own magnetic voice, and all would listen to him with respectful attention. He was a brilliant talker. He used to start his professional work at 9 O'clock at night. He would never appear in a case unless and until he had studied it well. He looked to the client's interest more than to his own; many a time he would refuse a brief if the client came to him very late. He valued his professional conscience more than his professional fees. Ungrudging in his expenditure for others he used to deny himself the ordinary comforts of life. In the hottest part of summer he would not engage even a Punkha-puller for himself, though he would not grudge the best possible comfort and luxuries to his daughter and his dependants. He encouraged his daughter to travel to all parts of India and many countries of Europe to gain experience and to educate herself to enable to work for the country.

THE UTKAL YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION:

For her part, Shoila Bala did her utmost to assist in her father's efforts for the progress and education of the Oriya people. Her education with boys at the Devotion College in Calcutta and the Ravenshaw College at Cuttack and her association with student volunteers at the Utkal Union Conference convinced her that, with a little courage and self-confidence, a woman could not only organise woman's work but also take the lead in organising activities and institutions for men. She conceived the ideas of an Orissa students' Association, there being no such at that time, the object of which should be to bring the young men together at the end of the day's work, and find occupation for each member in study, lectures, debates, healthy conversation and sports. She approached her father with her proposal and he approved of the scheme. He was always ready to help her to work for the country's cause. A sum of Rs.3000/- and a suitable house were placed at her disposal, and she attended the Utkal Young Men's Association in September, 1904. The then Principal of the Ravenshaw College Mr.B.V.Gupta, became the President, all the Professors were members, and Miss Das was the Secretary. For a whole year she worked with great enthusiasm for the success of the Association, and moved amongst the students as one of them, and was in daily attendance at the Association premises from 4 to 8 p.m.. The late Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhunj Deo of Mayurbhunj in his address at a meeting of the Association in 1905, made following remarks:- "The Report which has just been read by Miss Das is a record of brilliant work done within the incredibly short time of three months and a half. The record proves the fact that success attends the efforts of those who give their heart and soul to their work. This Association is a unique one of it's kind in Bengal, if I may not say in India. Its object is to supplement the education of students received in schools and colleges and to afford facilities for healthy and manly exercise, for literary education and debate and for associating the students together at the close of each day amid healthy surroundings. The Association may be called in one word, "the student's friend". I congratulate the student community of Cuttack for having all the advantages which this Association offers them in their way, and I congratulate the Association for having as

its honorary Secretary a lady, Miss Das to whose inspiration and energy the Association owes its existence, and to whose devotion and work much of its success is due".

HIS DAUGHTER'S VISIT TO ENGLAND:

In 1906 Madhusudan sent Shoila Bala to England to study Education, so that on her return from England she might devote her life to the cause of the education of the women of Orissa. He offered her every opportunity of Social contact and a most liberal education. His allowance to her while in England was very generous but she was asked in return to bring his country's cause to the notice of everyone with whom she came in contact and to prove that the Indian women is in no way inferior to an English woman. His letters to his daughter in England were so instructive that one of her college friends at the London University, Miss Mary Marshall, on reading them fell in love with the high ideals he expressed and was greatly impressed with the dignity of his character, saying to Shoila Bala once, "it is a great privilege to have such a father, so good to you, and so deeply earnest and high minded. You must be proud of him."

In March 1907 Shoila Bala was presented to their Majesties King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra at the Court by Lady Spicer. She was the first Indian lady to be presented in her 'sari' and to make the Indian salutation 'pranam' to their Majesties. Orissa was thus brought into prominence in the public eye of Europe and India. She made the sari recognised as a court dress for Indian ladies.

MADHUSUDAN'S SECOND VISIT TO ENGLAND:

In the summer of 1907 Madhusudan went to England for the second time. One object of his visit was to see Shoila Bala, who was ill. Her guardians, Lady Eliot and Lady Spicer, wanted her to return to India in the cold weather. The other object was to place before the British public the grievance of his people. The then Raja Rajendra Narayan Bhunj Deo of Kanika accompanied Madhusudan to England. The Raja and Madhusudan reached London in June 1907. During his short stay in London Madhusudan was very busy with the Orissa question. He addressed several meetings, interviewed some prominent Members of Parliament, and circulated the pamphlet 'Unrest in India', which he had printed in England. He also enlisted

the sympathy of the British Press on behalf of the eleven millions of Oriya people. The pamphlet captured the attention of a large number of prominent journalists of the day and some of them reviewed the same very favourably, giving the matter great prominence. Various English News papers of the time contained many references to Orissa and the Oriya movement.

The following extract is from the Tribune, Sept. 26, 1907. "A notable departure from London yesterday was that of Mr. Madhusudan Das, a distinguished scholar and administrator, who came from the remote Indian Province of Orissa, a little over a month ago, in order to lay before Mr. Morley the grievances of that country. Orissa is a province on the shores of Bay of Bengal which has the distinction of having been the first to lend a helping hand to 'John Company' in the earliest days of the British occupation. It was in Orissa that the first of the Great Bengal factories was founded and it was the Oriyas as its people are called, who aided the East India Company's troops when trouble first arose in those latitudes. The Oriyas have a language and an ancient culture of their own and their country is distinguished also as containing within its border a place of pilgrimage more revered perhaps, than even Benares itself. The great Temple of Jagannath, the only shrine in the East where caste ceases to exist, and where the poor may offer food to the highest and not be repulsed.

Mr. Das came to this country as the Representative of eleven millions of people, who with such unanimity as is possible among so enormous a community, speaking through their town and village councils sent him here to invoke the sympathy of the Government and the Secretary of State for India. The rulers of the Tributary States of Orissa have been deprived of their hereditary title of "Raja", which is as much as if a clerk of Somerset house were to inform an English baronet that hence-forward he would only be known as Mr. Blank; other native Chiefs have lost their dignities and been exiled. These are typical of many grievances of the people, but there are others of a far-reaching character which affect the well-being of hundreds of thousands of cultivators and landowners. The assessment of land for taxation is effected in India for a period of thirty years, Such an assessment in Orissa was carried out ten years ago, but though it has still twenty years to run, the Bengal Secretariat is already seeking

to revise it. During the last one hundred years Orissa has witnessed the abrogation of almost all her old treaty of rights. At one period all the elephants in Orissa were her own. Now they belong to anybody, but the Government takes the ivory. Her mines and minerals belonged to her rulers or landowners. Now the Government claims them. The hereditary rulers of her Tributary States had jurisdiction over their subjects. Today their powers are reduced to those of an English Country Justice of Peace. These are only a few of the complaints of Orissa, but they are sufficient to show that the Oriyas have as much right to betray "unrest" as any other people of Bengal. But to the majority of Englishmen, Orissa is probably even something less than a mere geographical expression. The Oriyas are not agitators, its news papers are not prosecuted, and its troubles are unknown in the West. We hear nothing from its people about "Swaraj" or "Swadeshi". All they do is to send Mr.Das over there to see Mr.Morley.

Mr.Das is the first member of the Oriya race who has ever crossed the "Kala Pani"---the "Black Water", and was the first member of that historic community to become a University graduate. He is an old man, now not so old as Mr.Dadabhai Naoroji, but at any rate something over 60. It is interesting to learn that his mission here has not been wholly unsuccessful. He has, at any rate, enlisted the sympathies of Mr.Morley on behalf of his fellow Oriyas".

There was a journalists' meeting in Scarborough on October 1st of 1907. The Raja Sahib of Kanika and Madhusudan laid the grievances of their race before the journalists. The following is an extract from the "Strand News", October 11, 1907.

"Mr.Das is satisfied that if the real state of thing can be brought home to the Government ,reforms will be forthcoming and he is straining every effort to adopt this same and constitutional cause in order to avoid further trouble. The people of Orissa are full of loyalty to the King, but they are revolting against the oppression of local officialdom. It is the disloyalty of these officials, said Mr.Das, which is the cause of the troubles, and he hopes as the result of an interview with Mr.Morley to obtain the redress which is asked for".

INTERVIEW WITH MR. JOHN MORLEY :

Madhusudan had an interview with Mr. Morley, the then Secretary of State for India, before the latter was raised to the

peerage, and laid the grievances of the Oriyas before him. In the course of the conversation they discussed the comparative merits and demerits of British rule, and British laws, as contrasted with Afghan despotism. The following is in Madhusudan's own words: "I told Mr. Morley that if he wished to maintain a despotic form of government in India, he should give the young Indian Civil Servants training on the lines which would make them successful despots in the work of administration. The young Englishman gets his education in the Public Schools and Universities of England, and is brought up as a free man. He is trained to rule over a free people. He embarks for India and his services are allotted to one Province. In India he is placed under the official guardianship of the Collector and Magistrate of a District and is expected to learn the style of administration which he should follow. All that he sees in his official guardian and all the instructions he receives from that guardian may be summed up in the following words—'This is not a free country and you must rule over it as a despot'. Exercise of unrestricted power is recommended to every young man. The young civil servant tries to be a despot, but he proves a failure because he has not been trained in the principles and secrets of despotic rule. Despots study human nature from a peculiar point of view. The despotic ruler knows where to make concessions to the people, with a view to practising oppression on a future occasion. If the Czar of Russia were placed on the throne of England, he would be assassinated within 48 hours of his beginning to rule. On the other hand if the noble Queen Victoria had been put on the throne of Russia, she would have resigned in less than 48 hours.' If you wish, I said to Mr. Morley, 'to introduce despotic rule in India train your civilians in Russia or Afganistan where they will learn the secrets of successful despotic rule'. The above was one of the observations I submitted to Mr. Morley. He asked me to what extent the British administration in India was unpopular. I said to him that India needs a despotic Viceroy. This surprised Mr. Morley, and he asked me whether I really believed in a despotic Viceroy. My reply was in the affirmative, and I have my reasons for giving preference to a despotic Viceroy such as Lord Curzon was".

ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE KANIKA FAMILY:

Reference has been made above to the fact that during this last visit of Madhusudan to England he was accompanied by the

Raja of Kanika. For a few years previous to this the Raja had been cultivating the acquaintance of Madhusudan and the latter had been taking interest in the young Raja's career.

The Raja respected Madhusudan as a father and called him "Dada", (a short form of the Bengalee word for grandfather). He was "Dada" to the Raja's wife and son too. The Raja's son the Tikayet Shoilendra Narayan Bhunj Deo, was practically brought up during his childhood in Madhusudan's house. Madhusudan took the keenest interest in the welfare of the family and the Raja's loyal service to his country was inspired by Madhusudan.

When in 1929 the Raja was appointed a member of the Executive Council of Bihar and Orissa, he called at Madhusudan's place to pay homage to his great and respected friend and the latter gave him his blessings. A letter from the Raja to Madhusudan given below shows how much he owed to Madhusudan and how deep was the friendship between the two. The relationship between the two families was very cordial even to the last day of Madhusudan's life. As a mark of the great love and respect in which the Raja's family held him, they associated their names with the monument with his daughter Shoila Bala. Madhusudan was their guide when he was alive. His ideas still inspire the family even after his death. The following letter from the Raja will speak for itself:

RANCHI

12th June, 1933

My dearest Dada,

I am very sorry to learn that your prostrate gland again is troubling you. I do sincerely hope that you will soon be cured. I pray to God that He might spare you for a long to guide the Oriya nation to advancement and prosperity to which, as I believe, the separation of the Orissa Province will afford a great opportunity.

I very highly appreciate the statements expressed in your letter of the 7th instant which reached me yesterday having been redirected from Patna. Whether my public career had been a success or a failure you are no doubt the best judge and it is your opinion that I greatly value. Whether I win praise or blame you will have an appreciable share in it as you are greatly responsible for my present life. Had I not come in your contact my life probably would have been different. I vividly remember the occasion you mentioned in your letter and that was the turning point in my life.

I have honestly tried to serve my country and if I have not been able to achieve my object as I wished, it is not due to want of desire, willingness or sincerity but to my limitations and shortcomings.

I am very grateful to the Almighty that in my life I have been rich in friends and among those I have always counted you as the foremost. So I very greatly value your statements. It has given me some satisfaction that I have been able to please you with which I consider to be a valuable reward for my services to the country.

With affectionate regard,
Your ever affectionately,
Rajendra.

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IX

SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORKS RESUMED

(A) SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL WORK: THE FAMINE IN ORISSA, 1907.

Madhusudan returned to India in the cold weather of 1907 and found that the people of Orissa were in the grip of a great famine. A great flood had ruined the crops and the people were starving.

Madhusudan took up the cause of the famine-stricken people and consequently came into conflict with the Government officials, as they did not want to declare a state of famine. Mr. Nevinson, a British journalist came out to India in the winter of 1907 and he toured in the interior of Orissa with Madhusudan to see the starving condition of the people. In his book of "New India" Mr. Nevinson has given a graphic account of the famine stricken people of Orissa. The local officials denied Madhusudan's statement that the country was in the grip of a famine. It would be interesting to know that the "Statesman" which had information from its own representative, specially sent to Orissa to report on the actual situation, said the following in its issue of November 16, 1907, in the editorial column. "The calamity which has recently come upon the country seems to have exceeded all recent experience. The trouble began with almost continuous rainfall in the first fortnight of August. All the crops have been destroyed and through the irony of fate, the second crop was destroyed by drought. The peasant is face to face with starvation. Famine is tightening its hold upon the devastated land... but while the condition of the people is known to public-spirited Indian gentlemen who have done their best to organise relief, the ghastly fact seems not to have come under the notice of the Government officials,....Some of the affected districts have not once been visited by the Collector, according to the story of the villagers, and there has been no indication of a Government power, except one, the collection of the Chowkidari Tax. While the people were selling their

very doorposts to buy rice and have been driven to their wit's end for food, the Government's minions have been busy distraining upon the starving". Madhusudan sent a telegram to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor Sir Andrew Fraser and he came to visit the famine stricken area. Madhusudan worked hard to alleviate the distress of the people. Mr. Nevinsohn, in his book "New India" has given an account of him, saying how Madhusudan was worshipped by the poor starving people. When the villagers heard that Madhu Babu (who was known to the people by that name) was coming to their villages, people from a distance of about twenty miles came to have a Darshan (sight) of him, they fell down at his feet and asked for his blessings. One man brought a cup of water and prayed that he would dip his toe in the water, so that by drinking it his wife might have a safe delivery in child-birth. Mr. Nevinsohn was touched to see their simple faith in Madhusudan. Madhusudan was worshipped by the masses from one end of Orissa to the other, and his name was a household word in Oriya homes. During the Christmas of 1907 Madhusudan sent two volumes of "Antiquities" by Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitter (the book is now out of print and is rare) as a Christmas present to Lord John Morley, together with a photo of the famine stricken people of Orissa, indicating what Orissa had been before the advent of the British, and what it was just then, under the British administration. He also wrote a letter to him, giving him a vivid account of the famine-stricken people of Orissa.

THE FIRST HIGH SCHOOL FOR ORIYA GIRLS:

In 1908 Shoila Bala, after her return from England with her father, started the first High School for Oriya girls at Cuttack in order to fulfil her mission and her father's dream. Madhusudan contributed fifteen to twenty thousand rupees towards this great work and some of the Feudatory Chiefs and Rajas, especially the Raja of Kanika and the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj, helped the great cause by substantial donations and periodical contributions. There were many ups and downs in the history of the school. Shoila Bala worked hard for five years to build up the school into a great institution. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor Sir Edward Baker helped her when she was in trouble with the local officials. (This school is at present known as the Ravenshaw Girl's School at Cuttack.) When she went to England in 1909, she left her father in her place as Hon. Secretary of the school, and in 1915 she made over the school in a flourishing

condition to the Government. This is now the only school in Bihar and Orissa which had a second grade Girl's College attached to it.

THE STUDENT'S FRIEND:

Madhusudan was always a friend of the students. Having known poverty in his own college days he knew the hardships of a student's life and always actively sympathised with struggling scholars. Whenever an Oriya student asked him for financial help, he always responded generously.

In 1912 he was invited to preside over the Bihari Student's Conference and in spite of his multifarious duties he accepted the invitation. He was a very forceful speaker and most fluent and impressive in his delivery. Many of the best public utterance of the Grand old Man of Orissa are lost to us for want of reporters, for generally he delivered his addresses extempore. It is fortunate that in the case of the Bihar Student's Conference, he departed from his usual practice and wrote out his speech. It was highly appreciated at that time by many of the leading papers in India. As it is a long address, it can not be reproduced here, except the advice which he gave to the students in the concluding part of his speech. It runs thus ---- "Each of you has been sent into this world with a special mission from your Creator. Find out your post, take your stand there, with heart within and God overhead, and do your duty without caring to know how the world views your conduct. When God first breathed life into you, were in your mother's womb, having no connection with the world around. When you will be lying on you deathbed and your eyes will fail to see, your ears fail to hear, your tongue fail to speak, you will have no connection with your conscience and if at the finish of life's work your conscience says you have done your duty, whatever the world might say of you, rest assured your Creator will address you in these words, "Well done, my child, thou hast been faithful into death. I will give thee a crown of life".

In 1928 the students of Orissa held a Conference at Balasore. Owing to illness Madhusudan could not attend it. But at the request of the Secretary of the Conference he sent a few words of advice to the students of which the following is an extract :

" I have in my public life acted on the following Principles -----

- (1) It was my duty first to elevate the Oriya's as a Nation to a level with the other surrounding Nations of India. In my humble

activities in my public life, I have never asked for a subscription from anybody, for I believe that true patriotism requires a man who wants his Nation to follow his lead, must devote all he has to the cause before he has the right to ask other people to spend money for the development of his ideas.

- (2) I have always drawn my inspiration from my Nation's past history and have never allowed myself to be led by movements outside Orissa, unless I was convinced that my Nation was prepared and had the resources---- intellectuals, financial and physical--- to bring the movement to success without the help of the people who are not Oriyas.
- (3) I have never in my life asked any help from any person for improving my position, income or honour. Please do not misunderstand me to say that I have not received any help from others, because I have received the help from many persons of very high position without asking for it.
- (4) I always ask God to help me in my activities in all spheres of life and He always gave me a guide to my feet and a light to my face and furnished me with ways and means to gain my object.
- (5) I have always consider it an insult to my ancestors and to my Nation generally to ask for charity from other Nations and I have never done so.

There is just now, as there has been for some years past, a feeling for the amalgamation of Orissa. Have you any sympathy for this movement? If you have sympathy, I am sure that you will wish that all Oriyas should live under one administration. You must have heard of petitions, memorials to Government, asking Government to bring all Oriyas together. Your conference harbours this ambition, I shall thank you to give full weight to the following facts, in considering the question of the amalgamation of Orissa. Thousands of Oriyas are migrating to other parts of India to work in the factories, because factory labour is more remunerative than agriculture labour. Thus you will see that you are expelling from Orissa a large number of men every year. As an example, I may mention that several lakhs of Oriyas work in the factories of Bengal. Do you expect that these factories should be brought under the administration of Orissa, or should it be your duty to have your own factories in Orissa and

thus bring back your brethren working in factories outside Orissa ? This is a question which has puzzled me. You must solve it in your Conference ."

(B) ADMINISTRATIVE WORK:

Since 1896 Madhusudan had been a member of the Bengal Legislative Council and he served in the Council for four terms with only one break in his membership. He was the first man from Orissa to be elected to the Bengal Council. In 1908 when he was again about to be returned to the Bengal Council the following letter was written to him by His Honour Sir A. Fraser, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal from Darjeeling. The letter needs no comment.

The Shrubbery,
Darjeeling.
20.10.1908.

My Dear Mr. M.S.Das,

I have just received the official notice of your nomination by the Orissa District Boards to my Council. I have sent up your name to H.E. the Viceroy for appointment. I congratulate you and trust that your terms of office will be fraught with advantage to the Government and to the people and with pleasure to yourself. I hope that you will bear in mind that I regard you as a colleague in the administration of this province and desire your frank and friendly advice and co-operation.

I am, yours sincerely,
Sir A. Fraser

Later, when Orissa was separated from Bengal, he became a member of the Bihar and Orissa Council. He was also an elected member of the Imperial Council in 1913 after the new Province of Bihar and Orissa was created. His speeches in the Council were remarkable utterances and are worthy of persual by all.

Madhusudan was elected a member of the Viceroy's Imperial Council in 1915 and the people of Orissa gave him an address of welcome on his return from Delhi. The address reads as follows:

"Dear Brother,

We are all here to welcome you back to this capital of Orissa

after your successful campaign in the recent political field of Orissa, and on your return from the Imperial Council in which our beloved Viceroy made his first public appearance after the dastardly outrage. Our hearts are full. We know not what to say and how to say it. Surely we shall fail to welcome you in befitting terms.

You have been the true son of our mother. In serving her you have sacrificed health, wealth and everything. Forums terrified you not, flattery failed to serve. You have put Mother Orissa on a pedestal from which no vandal can bring her down and the flight of steps you have built has made the progress of future pilgrims easy of access to Her Temple.

You have been the first of us, an Oriya winning honours from the Calcutta University as an M.A as well as B.L. first to secure a seat in the Legislative Council of Bengal, first to cross the ocean to visit England and the continent, and in keeping with these you are the first from Orissa and first among the Oriyas to achieve a seat in the Imperial Council at Delhi. In achieving these honours Province has uniformly blessed you with success, defeat you know not. In your unique career of strict honesty and blunt straight forwardness you have always enjoyed the confidence of the Government as well as of the people, making and leaving your footprint not upon the sands of time but upon the rock of ages. Mother Orissa has been served by you in your long life in various ways, but Her wants are not yet over. She expects from you with your usual unfailing zeal, energy and enthusiasm to serve Her still more., in fact till the end of your days. May God prolong your life and bless you with better health.

You have had congratulation from the great men of the world, but our lisping innocent welcome would surely sound to you sweetest and hence we venture to offer you our heartfelt congratulations.

Yours affectionately,
PEOPLE OF ORISSA

A CONFERENCE OF ORIYA WOMEN :

In 1931 there was a Conference of Oriya Women at Balasore. The Secretary, Reception Committee of the Conference who had previously asked Madhusudan by letter for a message of advice, sent him the following telegram: "Conference meets tomorrow, object to determine the duty and line of action of Oriya Women to promote

the interest of the society and the Oriya race ". Madhusudan sent the following long telegram in reply: "I highly appreciate the honour done to me in seeking my advice on this occasion ----- but I feel incompetent to offer any advice worth for serious consideration in Conference. In Orissa, man has treated woman as if she had been created to do service to man and God did not assign to her any special duty in composition of nation. The advice of any man is irrelevant. A few women have joined men in political agitation of the day to serve man in his political ambition; Whether woman serves man in domestic life or political life, it is in a subordinate position. Both ignore the Divine object in creating woman. You should enquire who has made European nations, what they are, father or mother and then decide what is your and what should be your line of action. May God help you in your deliberation, is the sincere prayer of Mr. M.S.Das."

THE FIRST LADY VAKIL IN INDIA:

It was the wish of Madhusudan that either Shoila Bala or Sudhansu Bala should pass the B.L. Examination and take up his profession. He wanted to see one of them practising at the High Court of Patna. Sudhansu Bala passed her Law examination but the Patna High Court would not enrol her as an advocate. She was the first Indian lady to fight for admission into the profession. She sent a memorial to Lord Reading, the then Viceroy in 1922. Madhusudan drafted the memorial and took steps to have the Legal Practitioner's Act amended, so as to enable a woman to practise in the Courts of India. The Act was amended in 1923 to that effect. It is through the efforts of Madhusudan that the legal profession has been thrown open to women in India. Sudhansu Bala practised in the High Court of Patna for two years. Madhusudan rejoiced in the new freedom gained for women.



X

MADHUSUDAN'S MINISTERSHIP

MADHUSUDAN , THE FIRST MINISTER OF LOCAL-SELF GOVERNMENT, BIHAR AND ORISSA:

In 1921 the " Montford" Reform Era began in India. Madhusudan was then a member of the Bihar and Orissa Council and Late Lord Sinha, the first Indian Governor of Bihar and Orissa appointed him the Minister for Local Self-Government of Bihar and Orissa. He told Madhusudan that he wanted a friend and an advisor who would be able to guide him in the discharge of his duties as Governor of the province. He did not want a "Jo- hukum-wala". In addition to being a trusted advisor and a most faithful minister of the State, Madhusudan was one among the most intimate personal friends to both Lord and Lady Sinha. He was often sent for by Lord Sinha at odd hours of the day and night. He sometimes spent hours with Lord Sinha while the latter was ill nursing him like an elder brother and giving him advice. Lord Sinha often consulted him about the state of his health. Two of his letters are reproduced below. Those will show what confidence Lord Sinha had in Madhusudan.

(1) From Lord Sinha

Government House, Ranchi

27.9.21

My dear Mr Das,

Could you come round this afternoon at about 4 p.m.? I should very much like to have a talk with you about my state of health which is causing me great anxiety. I thank you for your sympathy.

. Yours sincerely,
S.P. Sinha

(2) From Lord Sinha

Government House, Ranchi
28.9.21

My dear Mr. Das,

After you have left, I slept a little and feel much better this morning. The massage has done me good and I shall follow your advice with regard to my food.

Could you come round again this afternoon about 4 p.m.? I should like to discuss certain matter with you. I thank you for your kindness.

Yours sincerely,
S.P.Sinha

When Lord Sinha had at last to resign before the expiry of his term of office due to ill health, Madhusudan was most disappointed and disconcerted. It was his ardent desire that this first Indian Governor of a province should serve his full term and should set an example to all as to how an Indian could hold one of the highest office of state with dignity and distinction. Madhusudan did all he could to prevent Lord Sinha's health getting worse. All his attempts, however, were in vain.

Madhusudan tried to show by his work that an independent Minister without any self-interest, could carry on the diarchical form of Government even if he found difficulties thrown on his way by those in charge of the "Reserved subjects". During the short tenure of his office as Minister he achieved great popularity and was probably the only Minister in India who was remarkable for his outspoken criticism even of Government measures in the Council Chamber. Though he was a member of the Government, yet the frankness and fairness of his speeches in the Council, coming from the Government bench, often surprised the public. He always fought for the cause of the people. He never forgot that he was the representative of his people in the first place and the head of a Transferred Department in the next.

INCIDENTS DURING HIS MINISTERSHIP :

Out of the interesting and memorable incidents connected with his Ministership, a few, illustrative of his fearless advocacy of

the just cause and the strength of his will, are given below. After he has resigned, the following appeared in the "Searchlight" of the 6th March, 1929 which also shows what the Bihar newspapers thought of Madhusudan's Ministership. The first minister under the Reforms in charge of Local; Self-Government in Bihar and Orissa was Mr. M.S.Das of Cuttack, and a few incidents during Mr. Das's short period of work may be mentioned by way of contrast. During the short time that he was a Minister, he made his existence felt. The Provincial Retrenchment Committee of which the present Minister Hon'ble Sir (then Babu) Ganesh Dutta Sinha, was a member, was formed while Mr. Das was a Minister". "A temporary Executive Engineer in the Public Works Department outside the cadre of the permanent engineers, was being employed for several years. He was promoted to officiate in place of a Superintending Engineer going on leave and a permanent Executive Engineer was ordered to take the place of the temporary Engineer. The arrangement was gazetted, to the relief of the temporary Engineer who was waiting to take over charge. As soon as this was brought to the notice of the Minister Mr. Das, he cancelled the arrangement and the permanent Engineer, instead of relieving the temporary Engineer relieved the Superintending Engineer going on leave. In the meantime this temporary engineers applied for being permanent and the Chief Engineer recommended him for confirmation, but instead of sending the application through the minister the Chief Engineer sent it to the Governor through the Member in charge of Irrigation lest Mr.Das might raise any objection. The Governor approved of the confirmation and passed the order. But no sooner was this brought to the notice Of Mr. Das than he got the order of the Governor, already passed without the knowledge of the Minister, cancelled, and served the temporary Engineer with a notice, terminating his services at the end of the year. The Chief Engineer in charge of Building and Roads, under Mr. Das, finding that the old methods of working would no longer continue under a minister like Mr. Das, retired much before his time"

Having cancelled the order of the Governor, Madhusudan went to see the Governor with a resignation letter in his pocket as he thought that it was not right and proper for the Governor to interfere in his Department without his knowledge and pass orders. His Excellency

explained that the order was passed, in Madhusudan's absence from headquarters, to relieve the latter to some extent from the great pressure of work to which he was constantly and ungrudgingly subjected. The Governor did not take any offence at Madhusudan's cancelling his order, neither did he consider it a humiliation to have his order cancelled by his Minister. He did not wish to lose Madhusudan's service, and would not accept his resignation. Madhusudan sought neither favour nor honour. He did what he thought to be his duty in the firm faith that he was thereby serving God.

Another incident concerning Madhusudan's administration may be referred to here. Once there was a difference of opinion in the interpretation of the Government of India Rules relating to the All India Services. An English officer in his department considered that he had a claim to be promoted to a higher post. But Madhusudan's own interpretation of the Rule was not in his favour. As he and the Governor differed about the correct interpretation, the latter sent the file to the Government of India. The interpretation of the Government of India was in favour of the English officer. Madhusudan, at once, wrote a letter to the officer concerned, informing him of the interpretation of the Government of India and expressing his pleasure on the officer's winning his point. The officer was pleasantly surprised and was so struck with the magnanimity of the Hon'ble Minister that he wrote to him to the effect that as long as Mr. Das was at the head of the Department, none need ever suffer from injustice. The full text of the letter is given below —

Dear Mr. Das,

"Doranda"

19.9.22

Considering our relative positions I do not quite know how to answer your letter. I think it will be best if we leave our official positions alone for the time being and that I should answer your letter in the spirit in which it has been written and that you should accept this letter in the same spirit.

I thank you very much for having written your letter: honest and courteous acts like yours do more good to the cause of India than hundreds of Government circulars on the moral obligations of Government servants. Your gentlemanly act will be a great

encouragement to me in the future as I will be bound to feel, that so long as we have men like you at the head of affairs, all will be well. Your act is only one more proof of the reputation which you have in the P.W.D.— of honest, disinterested devotion to the public cause.

You have taught me a lesson—one of my ideals was to stick to an opinion which I thought right until I had been convinced that it was wrong. You have shown me that it is much better, from every point of view to acknowledge one's mistakes (if I may have the presumption of calling your opinion, in my case, a mistake).

There was no necessity for you to have done what you have done as all these things are everyday episodes, official eyes. You, as a Minister, have however gone out of your way to make reparation to me, as Under Secretary, all I can say is that I thoroughly appreciate your kind act and thank you sincerely for it.

Yours sincerely,
N.G. Dunbar

During his Ministership Bihar passed through an epidemic of plague. Madhusudan wanted certain medical officers to visit certain plague infected areas and remove the victims from these places. But as there was no motorable or any other kind of roads, and as reaching the areas involved walking through paddy fields, the officers hesitated to go. When Madhusudan came to know of this he at once decided to go to the affected parts himself. His Departmental Secretary Mr. Hallet (later Sir Maurice Hallet, the Governor of Bihar) and the Director of Public Health requested him not to court such a great risk to his health in his old age stating that they were willing to go to those parts themselves and do the needful. But Madhusudan was firm in his decision and went there himself. Some of the Assistant Civil Surgeons accompanied him. He walked from three to four miles a day through paddy fields and worked among the plague-stricken people, sat near them, spoke to them. The Medical Officers who accompanied him were astonished to see him go through hardships which they themselves could not bear, but Madhusudan's strong will and faith in God kept him up and gave him strength to do what he considered his duty.

Another instance shows tenacity of purpose. An Assistant Civil Surgeon had been dismissed from service for no fault of his own before

Madhusudan took charge of the department. This man hearing that he was a strong Minister, just and independent, wrote to him regarding his grievances and requested him to do justice to him. Madhusudan sent for his file at once. The Secretariat thought that as the case had been disposed off before the Reform Era began the Hon'ble Minister could not very well take up the case again. So they did not send the file. But Madhusudan gave the order that the file must be sent to him as he had the right to ask for any file he wanted to see whether concerning his own term of office or not. No one dared to disobey his order. When the file came he went through it and found that the doctor had been dismissed not for any fault of his but of others. He drew the attention of the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals to this fact, and the Inspector-General, after going through the file, reinstated the doctor.

During the visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Patna in 1922 there was a good deal of discussion regarding Madhusudan's dress for the occasion: He was asked by the Governor to wear the dress of Members of the Executive Council, as both the Ministers were required to be in attendance on His Royal Highness. But Madhusudan would have nothing to do with the dress of an Executive Councillor and decided strongly in favour of the national costume, that is the achkan and pagree, and H.E. the Governor was pleased to accept his decision.

Madhusudan was against any unnecessary expenditure of public funds to provide pomp and luxury to officers of the State. Often the trifling act of a man in the course of his everyday life reveal his inner nature. Here are a few episodes of this nature which indicate the nobleness of Madhusudan's mind.

Each Member of the Government had a large retinue of Chaprasis with a Jamadar at the head who was dressed in gaudy lively showing off his own importance as well as the high position of his master. Madhusudan never liked taking out the Jamadar with him as he did not desire to attract others notice. It was thus a great disappointment to his Jamadar that he could not show himself off to his fellow Chaprasis.

As there was a talk of curtailing the expenditure of the Government, Madhusudan proposed that a host of chaprasis were not at all necessary and that their number should be reduced. His

Excellency the Governor was pleased to accept his proposal and reduced the number of his own Chaprasis, and all the other Members of the Government followed suit.

As a matter of custom, Members of the Government have constables stationed at their residences. Madhusudan objected to having a constable day and night standing by the gate of his residence. He did not mind the Members of the Reserved Department having constables, but he would not have any posted at his house. Madhusudan was of opinion that as the Ministers were the representatives of the people, their gates should be left open day and night for the people and as long as he was a Minister, the services of constables were not required.

The Government paid a large sum of money to the Associated Press for sending copies of telegrams to the Members of the Government. Madhusudan thought that it was a waste of public money. The Members of the Government could certainly wait for a few hours to learn the news in the ordinary course. His proposal was accepted, and so long he was Minister, telegrams were not subscribed for on account of the Members of the Government.

When Madhusudan came over to Patna he found that there were no Government Quarters for Ministers. He rented a house. The Chief Engineer and the Superintending Engineers told his daughter that if the Minister would sanction the plan for his own house which was ready and would also sanction the money to construct, it would be ready in six month's time. She approached her father and told him to sanction the plan and grant the money. He replied that his conscience could not allow him to sanction Rs. 65,000/- for his house when there was not enough money available for thousands dying of plague, cholera, malaria, kala-zar and other epidemics. He further said that it was not desirable for a Minister to stay in the New Capital away from the contact of people. As a Minister was a representative of the people. He must live near the people, so that he might be accessible to them all the time. If a house was at all to be built for the Minister, it must be built in Bankipur in the heart of the town, and not in the secluded European Quarters. While he was a minister he lived in rented Houses at great personal inconvenience.

High Government Officials have office rooms in the Secretariat

as well as in their own residences and these rooms are furnished at Government's cost. The higher the position of the officials the more costly is their furniture. As a Minister of the Government, Madhusudan was entitled to have his office room in his residence suitably furnished at Government expense. It was during Madhusudan's absence at Ranchi that the Registrar of the Local Self-Government came and furnished his office room with a carpet worth nearly a thousand rupees. As soon as Madhusudan came back from Ranchi and saw the costly carpet in his room he insisted on its removal and it had to go.

An incident is narrated here showing how Madhusudan was entirely free from the superiority complex of office.

It was his express order to his Chaprasis and Jamadar that who ever called on him should be announced at once, and none should be kept unnecessarily waiting. Once, when Madhusudan was having his afternoon tea, an Overseer of the Public Works Department came for an interview with him at the direction of the Executive Engineer. The Jamadar did not report at once, but waited till the minister had his tea. In the meantime Madhusudan himself came out and saw the gentleman waiting. He severely reprimanded the Jamadar and threatened him with dismissal if he behaved in this way in future, and then took the Overseer with him to his room and asked him to tea. The embarrassment of the poor Overseer, in the presence of his Minister in a situation like this can, well be imagined. Madhusudan made him feel quite at home by his friendly talk and let him know that there was no justification for one to keep another waiting. The Overseer was overwhelmed with feeling of love and respect for the great man and observed that he had never received such treatment from any of his official superiors. Thereafter Madhusudan one day went to visit the Overseer at his house, accepted an invitation to dinner by his wife and dined one evening with the family.

As a rule, Members of the Government do not draw any travelling allowance like ordinary Government Officers but whenever they are required to make a Railway Journey they have to sign a warrant which entitles each of them two first class compartments or a saloon, one berth in the second class, and a third class compartment for servants, besides half a van for luggage. Once, when Madhusudan was out on a tour, his daughter accompanied him. At the Railway

Station he asked his stenographer to purchase a first class ticket. No one could understand what it might be for. When his daughter asked for the reason he said, "Well, it is for you". He then read out to his daughter the rules on the back of the warrant which he had to sign and that the Government provided reserved accommodation only for the Member and not for any member of his family. All were astounded. When his daughter pointed out to him what was usually done by other Members of the Government, he simply said : "I do not want to know what others do, but I know what I should do". In his subsequent tours he never had for himself more than one first class compartment as he considered it mere waste of public money to have more than that.

Madhusudan would never take any advantage of his position for personal ends. If his stenographer did any private work for him, he would pay him for it from his own pocket. The following notes found amongst his papers after his death will show his relations with his stenographer.

From M. S. Das to his stenographer —
Stenographer,

You have done some work for me when you were off duty. There was a distinct understanding that you should be paid for all that work. I do not remember exactly the number of pages you have typed but I suppose you have kept an account of what you did. I shall thank you to let me know what I have to pay you on account of that work. I do not like that you should lose, and it would be very unfair on my part to rob you of your just due.

Dated 7.7.1922.

M.S.Das.

Reply of the stenographer:

H.M. (Submitted to H.M.)

I have received from him Rs.45/- and the work I have done for H.M. is not worth the amount I have already received. I must admit here that H.M. gives me a liberal treatment in these as well as in other respects. I have kept no account of what I have done, but I am sure I have nothing due. If I would pray for anything; it is his blessing, which I value more than anything, in this world.

THE MAN AND HIS MISSIONS 9

Dated 7.7.1922.

M.M.S.

His treatment towards his Chaparasis was of similar nature. He would pay him extra from his pocket when they did any private work for him. Though a disciplinarian he always treated his subordinates with kindness and sympathy. This reminds us of a famous Sanskrit adage, which means, "Stern than the thunder-bolt yet softer than a flower".

SIR HENRY WHEELER'S SPEECH AT THE CAXTON HALL (LONDON) :

Sir Henry Wheeler, an Ex-Governor of Bihar and Orissa, paid Madhusudan the highest compliments at a meeting at Caxton Hall, London in September 1927, when he said that diarchy was not a failure during his Government, that the success or failure of diarchy depended on the Minister and that if the Minister was strong and intelligent and worked in the interests of the people, diarchy was sure to be a success.

Here is an extract of the report of his speech published in the Statesman of Calcutta of the 9th Sept, 1927.

"Mr. Das, who was Minister in Bihar and Orissa, carried out reforms of the Municipal and District Board's Act that went far beyond what cautious officials regarded with favour and which has put powers in the hands of local bodies to a far greater extent than in England.

This too, had brought about results which many officials, non-officials, Europeans and Indians viewed with considerable apprehension. Therefore, the representation of the Minister as a powerless being was inaccurate".

The change of outlook of the Indian Civil Service necessitated by the introduction of the Reforms was emphasised by Madhusudan in a note to the Government in the following terms---"as regards the transferred subjects the Minister should be at liberty to select his Secretaries from the members of the services in the Province. All the members of the services do not relish the idea of serving under an Indian Minister. This is natural and I do not find fault with them. The services have been accustomed to see India from England. It is now necessary to see India from India. The point of view makes a great difference. One may see in England the sun enveloped in mist while the man in India sees the country flooded with sunshine".

CONFERENCE WITH THE CHAIRMEN OF THE LOCAL BOARDS:

Before the Local-Self-Government Act came into force, Madhusudan invited all the Chairmen of the District Boards and Municipalities to a Conference in the Council Chamber at Patna. The Conference lasted for three days and he entertained all the members each day to tea and some of them to lunch. He made a most impressive speech at the Conference which he opened. During this Ministership he gave the people of the Province more power to manage their own affairs than any other Minister, except perhaps Sir Surendranath in Bengal, and also enfranchised women for municipal elections. He fought for the rights of the people but the rights which he had won for them were, in some cases, taken away later on. In subsequent years many of the Municipalities were superseded by the Government. When Madhusudan came to know that his own Municipality of Cuttack had been superseded he was almost moved to tears. Even in his death bed he could not forget this disappointment, which he had, regarding the competency for public work of some of his own people. His ministry was marked by important events and great changes in the methods of administration. His colleague, Sir Muhammed Fakiruddin, the Minister of Education had great respect for Madhusudan. In all difficult matters Sir Muhammed consulted his brother Minister, who ungrudgingly helped him. Great cooperation and harmony prevailed between the two colleagues.

HIS SPEECH ON AGRICULTURE:

One of his speeches from the Government Bench will suffice to show that Madhusudan never hesitated for a moment to oppose the Government's proposal if it went against the interests of the people. An extract from the speech reproduced here will speak for itself: "I did not intend to speak on or about agriculture because I have had experience about agriculture and I have my opinion of agriculture which I have learnt at the cost of several thousand of rupees. I am not going to have anybody's advice which is offered to me for nothing. The Member of the Board of Revenue wishes that the District Boards should do this work. I do not like the idea of having an adopted child forced upon them, because I have to make the management of something of which I shall have a very sad experience. The Hon'ble Members may

remember that, when the Government of Bengal had undertaken to encourage, and stimulate agriculture at that time the name Heer Voelcker referred to by the last speaker, was brought out. He wrote a book. I dare say many of the Hon'ble members have read his book. Its conclusion was that the Indian Agriculturalist has brought the art of cultivation to perfection so far as this country is concerned. It is not possible to make any improvement. Well, I made some experiments just at the time when the Government was making them. Government paid scholarships to students for studying agriculture abroad and when these students came out they were employed as Deputy Magistrates and Sessions Judges. They were sent out to encourage cultivation and make agriculture a paying business. But they were engaged in hanging men and sending them to jail. Some of my friends might remember Mr. M.C.Sen and Mr. D.L.Roy, who turned out very good poets. I myself had an experience with 200 acres of land. Before I made experiments, I went up straight to the man in charge of the Agricultural Department at Sibpore who was a relation of mine, and asked him to give me his advice. He said, 'Don't do these things. They will never pay'. Then I said, "I want to make experiments. Give me one of your assistants who has the best experience". I got the assistant, and said to him: "I will simply honour your bills. Here is a land of 40 acres you choose any land-like. Now let us see what the receipts and disbursements are. He was a young man who had read up to the First Arts, as it was called then and he selected a piece of land, and said that it was good for sugarcane. However I allowed him to have the land and he planted 2,000 bits of sugarcane, but only three survived. At the end of the year I got the accounts. The expenditure was a little over Rs.2000/- and the income was about Rs.9/- and a few annas.

I will give you another instance. One of these gentleman advised me that horn shaving was very good as its benefits were stated in such books. I tried some horn shaving on some land. Of course in a cold country it takes a long time for horn shaving to become mould, because fermentation takes a long time, but here I found that in two months it was as good as mould. I was told to plant paddy there, and it was beautiful. I thought they were going to become bamboo trees and not paddy. But when it was going to flower the horn shaving produced peculiar kinds of insects, which destroyed the paddy on

that land , and all the paddy on the surrounding lands.

One thing I do not understand, and that is why the British Government points the Indians to the improvement of cultivation and agriculture .As a matter of fact we know that India produces more food grains than she requires. She exports a large quantity of food grain, and she imports articles or products of industry. The man that drives the plough earns three annas a day , but when he is employed in works of industry he earns three rupees a day .Sensible men sometimes say that it is because Europe wants to have occupations for which wages are high, that the Indians must be kept down to occupations where wages are low. Do you find that amount of encouragement from Government in industrial matters? Any amount of praise is bestowed on agriculture and we are told that India is a land of agriculture. But I know that in the nineties when I was travelling in England I saw that along the railway lines thousands of acres of land are laying waste, while smoke from big factories was going up to heaven. Look at the extent of agriculture that Great Britain had when Queen Victoria ascended the throne and after sixteen years it fell down to one-quarter. England took up better paying occupations and gave up agriculture , but India must have agriculture , so that she might supply food grain at a cheap rate to foreign countries.

It may be due to my stupidity , and I do not understand economic principles; but certainly I should like to have reasonable, intelligible and lucid interpretation of these economic principles. As regards the Agriculture Department being, as it were fastened upon the District Boards, if I have to do anything District Boards, I would certainly ask every District Board not to undertake such a responsibility. With these remarks I certainly oppose that part of the suggestion and suggest that District Boards should have nothing to do with agriculture."

This Speech came from the Minister opposing the Government proposal in the interest of the District Boards under his administration.

The following letter from Madhusudan to the then Governor of Bihar and Orissa with reference to the remarks made by Madhusudan during a debate on the High Court grants will be of interest —

From

M .S. Das .

PATNA

the 14th April, 1922.

To

His Excellency Sir Henry Wheeler,
The Governor of Bihar and Orissa.

Your Excellency ,

As promised I send an uncorrected copy of my remarks during the first debate on the High Court grants. I have not corrected it (This may be returned when done with).

On the first debate the Ministers did not vote and no question (certainly not within my knowledge) was raised as to the propriety of the Ministers' conduct. A review of the Council's decision was sought by Government. I have given my best consideration to Your Excellency's observation on the propriety of a united front by Government in Council, but before this can be reasonably expected of me I think I should be a party to the discussion of the subject in which my support in Council is expected even when I have the misfortune to differ from that part of the Government dealing with the reserved subjects. My support, though against my personal views, can be justified only on the general principle that a minority must accept the decision of the majority. This is a vital principle of a corporate body .The communication with the High Court was made without my knowledge. The restoration of a grant, rejected by the Legislation Council by the Governor should have been the ordinary procedure. In this case an unusual procedure was adopted of opening correspondence with the High court .A long letter was received from the High Court. I do not know, not even to this moment , who took the initiative in this unusual procedure. But whether it be some Hon'ble Member individually or the Governor with his Hon'ble Members or the Hon'ble High Court who took the initiative it was an unusual procedure. As this was done for a review of the Legislative Council's decision, I am inclined to think, this has no precedent to justify it. I was kept altogether in ignorance of this procedure. A lengthy document being a rejoinder by the Hon'ble High Court was received by the

Government. Copies of this rejoinder were supplied to the Hon'ble Mr. Sinha and to the Hon'ble Minister of Education, But no copy was supplied to me. When I met the other Members of Government at a Joint Meeting of Hon'ble Members and Ministers, it was there that I learnt for the first time that a communication had been received from the High Court. I was given a copy there by the Chief Secretary and I was told that I should return it in Council without fail. I had no time to read the document with care, one cannot do this while the contents are being discussed. I returned the documents to the Chief Secretary before the Legislative Council sat. I think Your Excellency's in-formant should have brought to your notice these facts when laying a charge against me of having failed to support the Government in the division. If this was not done he was not fair to me. The result of the division was 28 against 21, I was in my seat and signed main proceeding. I had not voted on the first occasion. How could I do otherwise on the second debate? If I am expected to support the Government in matters not relating to subjects in my charge, I must be a party to the whole discussion of the question and the papers should be sent to me before discussion at a Joint Meeting of Hon'ble Members and Ministers. The procedure hitherto followed here, has been as given below :

In matters relating to the Reserved subjects the views of the Ministers are occasionally taken and then they are dismissed and His Excellency and the Hon'ble Members form their decision. With this procedure it is not fair to expect me to support. In such circumstances it will be the support of a dummy which I am sure I am not. Your Excellency should not care to have and I certainly would not under any circumstances lend my support to a measure which I had not an opportunity to discuss with the other Member of Government including His Excellency, the Governor. I solicit definite ruling on the subject for I am running the risk of being judged behind my back without notice to me.

I remain ,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,
M. S. Das.

RESIGNATION OF HIS MINISTERSHIP:

Madhusudan was the first Minister in India to resign his office.

While he was on tour he had a meeting of the Chairmen of the District Boards and the Municipalities. He talked with them and impressed upon them their responsibilities and requested to discharge those conscientiously. He heard some of them saying, "but it is very easy for the Hon'ble Minister to ask us to work and give more time to the work while we do honorary work and he draws a salary of Rs.5000/- a month". This remark created a great impression on his mind. He knew that the man was right in making such a remark and that he would not be justified in taking the Chairmen to task for the work of the District Boards and Municipalities so long as he himself drew a salary. He told his daughter all about his feelings and expressed a desire to be an Honorary Minister and work like the Chairmen, provided he would be allowed to earn his livelihood from his practice, as he was not a rich man, but the Governor would not accept his proposal. The following correspondence passed between Madhusudan and Sir Henry Wheeler in this connection.

From: M.S. Das

PATNA

The 7th February 1923

To

His Excellency, the Governor of Bihar and Orissa,

I beg to submit the following for Your Excellency's persual and favourable consideration.

The success of the Reforms must be decided by the nature of administration by the Local Bodies Medical Relief, Sanitation, Communications and the Education of Masses are subjects, the administration where of has been transferred to Municipal and District Boards. The importance of these subjects can be gauged by imagining for a moment the abolition of these departments during the trial period of the Reforms. The new Municipal Act makes the Municipal Boards wholly responsible for the administration of the rural area. The people have not developed a due sense of responsibility necessary for efficient administration of the subjects entrusted to them. The members of the Local Bodies are honorary workers. Honorary office means sacrifice from a sense of duty to the King and the Country. These Local Bodies

when constituted under the New Act will need constant guidance and advice of the Minister of Local Self-Government. In order that the Minister might exercise an influence over the honorary workers throughout the Province, it is necessary that he should be an honorary worker. A salaried official over the head of thousands of honorary workers is an anomaly. He can not command their respect and consequently his appeals to the patriotic and benevolent feelings of the people will make the scheme a subject of ridicule to the people. To ensure the success of the Reforms it is necessary that the Minister of Local Self-Government should not draw any salary, but should be an honorary worker.

In India personal influence is an important factor when we have to secure the active sympathy and co-operation of the people. Personal influence is earned by working without remuneration. Gandhi's activities in India have proved to demonstrate the value of sacrifice as the price of personal influence.

The non-co-operation movement is a great impediment to the advancement of the Reforms. The non-co-operators succeeded in spreading a network of a mischievous propaganda. The personal influence of a few men like Gandhi, C.R.Das is due to their sacrifice. We have to combat with this opposing force; a salaried Minister of Local Self-Government has no chance in this struggle. We must have men who are inspired by patriotic feelings: honorary workers in the Local Bodies are a valuable counter force, but a salaried Minister destroys the harmony and symmetry of the whole organisation. Hostile criticism in the Legislative Council, in the press and elsewhere regarding the salary of the Minister shows that the public want an honorary Minister of Local Self-Government.

I am willing to work honorary provided I am allowed to earn a living by practising as a Vakii. I shall not allow my professional work to interfere with my duties as a Minister. If I had private means to keep me above the ordinary needs of life I would not have asked for permission to practise. I have been in public life for nearly 40 years and being the first graduate of Oriya race, my public life meant financing all public movements. I gave a small portion of my time to my professional work as my public duties took the greater portion of my time. There is nothing inconsistent in the idea of a practising lawyer

being a Minister. There is a precedent of a Zamindar being a member of the Executive Council. The Maharajadhiraj of Darbhanga was the first Indian Member of the Executive Council in the province. I saw in the papers in the other day that the Raja of Mahmudabad has been appointed as an honorary member of the Executive Council of the United Province. A Zamindar has to look after the affairs of the estate, he is a party to suits in courts and has to give evidence in courts. If this is not considered derogatory to the prestige of an Hon'ble Member of Council, appearance for a party in court by a lawyer should not be considered in any degree derogatory to the prestige of a Minister.

The legal profession has always been considered honourable. The Provincial Government and the Government of India have recruited Members of their Executive Councils from the practising Members of the Bar. Practising lawyers have been members both the Provincial and Imperial Governments and at the end of their services have reverted to professional practice. These precedents are a complete answer to objections to my proposal on the ground of loss of prestige.

A Member of the Executive Council is responsible for the administration of the Reserved subjects. Law and Order constitute the most important of the reserved subjects. There may be breach of among the tenants of a Zamindar, Member of the Executive Council or a Zamindar Minister. These might occur while a Zamindar is a member of the Govt. Such a state of things would place the Government in an awkward position. Such difficulties can not arise when legal profession is the means of livelihood of a Member of Government, whether he be a Member or a Minister.

Local Self-Government is a transferred subject. The responsibility of administration is transferred to the people. The Minister is an elected Member of the Council. His appointment as a Minister creates a new relation with His Excellency the Governor, but the superimposition of this relation does not relieve him of his responsibilities to the people and the Legislative Council which represents the interests of the people.

Section 80 B of the Government of the India Act says that a Minister "shall not be deemed to be an official and a person shall not be deemed to accept office on appointment as a Minister."

Section 124 of the Government of India penalises acts amounting to misdemeanours by persons holding office under Crown of India, Clause 5 of the section prohibits the receipt of presents, but it exempts from such prohibition the fees paid or payable to Barristers. This word Barrister is meant to include other Legal Practitioners especially Vakils practising in High Courts.

I shall undertake not to absent myself from the meetings of Council, I shall not allow my professional engagements to interfere with my duties as a Minister. I shall consider my professional practice as a means of earning a living and if I have to reduce my comforts of ordinary life; I would not mind it considering that this sacrifice will be more than amply rewarded by bringing the people in close touch with the Government and thus kill the spirit of non-co-operation and inspire a desire for co-operation with the Government.

In the interview which I had with His Excellency the Viceroy during his visit to Patna, I expressed my views on this subject. It was an informal discussion. I gathered His Excellency would not have an objection to an experiment in an individual case though it would not be difficult to get a man with necessary qualifications to accept the office without a salary.

Many chairmen in Municipal and District Boards are practising lawyers. A practising lawyer as a Minister would lend harmony and symmetry to the scheme.

The duties of a Minister of Local Self-Government require a knowledge of law and medicine. The Local Bodies are manned largely by lawyers. In consequence, questions involving interpretation of the provisions of the Municipal Act often come up for decision to the Minister. The new Municipal Act came into force on 1st January of the current year. Before the 15th of January one Municipality passed a resolution which they thought was warranted by a certain section of the Act. The question came up to me for decision. I have received representations containing reference to Halsbury's laws of England. My knowledge of law and my study of medicine in early life have been a great help to me in the discharge of my present duties.

It might be necessary to take an additional hand in the Secretariat, but a discussion on this aspect should be taken up should Your Excellency decide on accepting my proposal.

I remain ,
Your Excellency's most obedient servant,
M.S.Das.

His Excellency the Governor's reply to the above ----

PATNA

The 11th February, 1923

Dear Mr.Das,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 7th-8th instant, in which you give your reasons for suggesting that you are willing to work as Minister in an honorary capacity if allowed to earn your living by practising as a Vakil. While not in agreement with the arguments which you urge in justification of such a course, I am afraid there are, to my mind, serious practical objections to it. I do not see how in practice you could combine these duties while doing justice to both or either. Secondly it appears to me to be an absolute impossibility that a Minister should appear as legal practitioner in courts subordinate to the Government of which he is a member. I know of no precedent for such a position. I will be happy to discuss the matter should you wish to do so, but I regret that I do not see my way to accept your proposition.

Your's sincerely
H.Wheeler

In the Legislative Council some members wished to reduce the salary of the Ministers to Rs.4000/- a month. It was decided by the Government that the Ministers should not accept a lower salary. Madhusudan had already decided to send in his resignation but owing to his brother Minister's suggestion, he had not resigned before the question of the salary was settled in the Council. There was a difference of opinion amongst the members in the Council with regard to the salary. Seeing that the brother Minister wished to continue in his post even at a reduced salary, he accepted his proposal in the Council and safeguarded the position of his brother Minister, but that very night he sent the following resignation letter to the Governor.

Letter of Resignation of Mr. M.S.Das.

PATNA

The 8th March, 1923

Your Excellency,

Your Excellency has, I am sure, been informed of the results of the motions about Minister's salary and a copy of my speech must have been submitted to Your Excellency.

I was obliged to accept the proposal of a reduced pay because I found that my brother Minister was willing to accept the proposal and he felt that I was an impediment in his way. In order to improve his position I agreed to accept the proposal. My brother's position being now secure, I beg to resign my office as Minister of Local Self-Government. I still believe that the office ought to be honorary, but as Your Excellency rejected my proposal on the subject I did not think I should continue in this office.

I solicit the favour of your relieving me of my duties by making the necessary arrangements, and I shall in the meantime carry on the duties of the office.

Permit me to express my sincere gratitude to you for the kind and cool way in which you considered my views even when I had the misfortune to disagree with you. My humble services as a non-official will always be at your command should you require them in the interest of the country over which God has appointed you to rule.

I remain,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,
M.S.Das

The news of Madhusudan's resignation from Ministership came as a surprise to everyone. Officials and non-officials considered his relinquishment of office a great loss to the administration, and his inability to see his way to continue to serve for the rest of his term was widely regretted.



XI

A LIFE OF SWEET, SO BEAUTIFUL

The closing scene is not far off now and the early traces of it can be seen. It may be in the fitness of things to make a passing reference at this stage of the narrative to a few of the innumerable anecdotes which disclose, in this great man's life, so much charm and beauty. Lower animals as well as human beings, great and small alike, found a soft corner in his large heart and the enormous wealth which he earned was more for the enjoyment of others than for his own.

LOVE FOR DUMB ANIMALS :

The garden of his Cuttack house at one time was a veritable zoo. Here, in a huge wooden shade covered with wire nettings and with trees inside he has many birds of pretty colours. They sang merrily the whole time. Mainas in half a dozen cages were hung up all over the verandah and they chattered like human beings. When they saw people coming, they would shout "Who are you ? Stop", "Give me your name". "Bearer come soon", "Where is Madhu Babu ?" "He is in the office" etc. The visitors would be astounded and look all around for the sign of a human being.

Early in the morning when Madhusudan was in bed, he would hear the voice of the Mainas, calling him "Sweet Dada, good morning get up", "Khansama, bring tea", "Haria, where is the hooka? Bring it soon". The birds entertained him a lot. Even when he was tired or worried he loved to hear their bovie. He had a pair of lovely peafowl which he kept in a house covered with wire netting in the flower garden. It was a delight to any, to watch them dance when they were let loose in the garden.

He had some mongooses which he first tamed and then gave freedom and they used to run all over the garden and come to him when he called them by their names. He had also two tigers and one bear. The tiger cubs were given to him by a Raja. He fed them when

young with bread and milk and let them be at large in the house like dogs. One day they were playing with chicken. Somehow one chicken got hurt and bled whereupon the cubs sucked the blood and seemed to like it better than their daily meal. Since that day, they would not touch bread and milk and began to show their instinctive preference for raw meat. After this incident they were put in iron cages. Tigers, bears, deer, birds and horses belonging to his mini zoo were the hoi of the school boys. Daily they used to come and walk about the garden to animals and birds. His garden was open to all. He was also very fond of dogs. He used to play with them when at leisure and one or two of his pets would lie down near his feet while he worked in his office room. He used to see to their feeding himself after he returned from court, and when they were ill he would doctor them personally.

Once while he was in Calcutta his pet dog Nero got ill. He had to send the dog to a veterinary hospital at Park Street as he could not keep it with him at the Grand Hotel. He returned to Cuttack and was obliged to leave the dog at the hospital. After his return he got a letter from the Veterinary Surgeon saying that the dog had not touched any food since he left and the next day he got a wire that the dog had run away by breaking the chain. The whole of that night Madhusudan could not sleep. His heart was torn with anxiety for the dog and he blamed himself for leaving the dog behind and not doing his duty to the poor animal which was deeply attached to him. He engaged a detective to trace the dog, informed the police about the loss and offered a reward to any one who would give information about his pet. He spent a lot of money, but all his efforts proved unsuccessful. A year after, one morning he was walking with a friend through Sukea Street in Calcutta. Suddenly he was best down by the load of two paws of a huge dog on his shoulder, barking with joy and licking his face, hands, etc. It was his lost dog "Nero". The man who had the dog came out of his house and claimed his dog. Madhusudan smilingly said, "Take him away if he is yours". The man tried his utmost to tempt the dog to go with him, but the dog would not leave his old master. Madhusudan gave the man his card and told him that it was his lost dog and that the matter was reported to the Police when the dog ran away a year ago, and called the dog by his name and walked on. The dog followed him barking and jumping round him to show his happiness

in finding his master. Madhusudan was so pleased to get back his lost dog that one would think he got back his lost child.

HIS HORSES :

His stable was full of good horses, some of them hardly ever used by him. He had a number of Burma ponies which he got direct from Burma and they were beauties. He had also walers and other horses and his stable was the best at Cuttack. The Arab horse, he had, was trained by him to do his bidding and was used only for his dog-cart. The horse understood him and loved him and used to follow him like a dog. At his breakfast time the syce would let him loose and the horse would come into the dining room without upsetting any furniture, stand at the breakfast table and would take his meal of bread and sweets which his master placed before him in a plate. The horse would leave the room when he was asked to go straight to the stable. Some evenings when he went out in his dog-cart he would get down at the river-side, to walk home and if he had no syce with him, he would tell the horse to go home with a pat on his back and the horse return home with the dog-cart, unattended, without any accident. This was his favourite horse. One day an English official, who was a friend of Madhusudan asked for the loan of the horse and his tumtum to go to Puri on some urgent work. In those days there were no motor cars and trains, and Madhusudan's Arab was the swiftest animal in the stable. Madhusudan never refused to lend his things to any one, but somehow he did not feel quite happy this time in lending his favourite Arab. However, he advised the gentleman not to use the whip, in which case the horse would be uncontrollable. While returning from Puri, the official was impatient to reach Cuttack soon and so he only touched the shoulder of the horse with the whip and the result was that the horse simply flew and he could not control him; a cart laden with bamboos was passing, the horse dashed against it, a bamboo pole pierced his stomach and he fell down and died. When the news came to Madhusudan, he said not a word, but spent the whole night on his terrace and shed tears over his beloved horse. Since that day he never used the dog-cart again. He loved the other horses also. If any of them got ill he would not trust the syce but would himself sleep at night on the verandah of the stable and look after the sick horse. In the hottest part of the day he would return on foot from the morning

Court but would not use his horses. If asked for the reason, he would say that heat was too much for the animals and he would not like to treat them cruelly. They were dumb animals and needed kind treatment.

SACRIFICE FOR DEPENDANTS :

A friend once wanted the loan of a bedstead. Madhusudan had guests in his house and all the beds in his house were in use. He gave orders to his bearer to give his own bedstead and make his bed on the floor. Upon this his daughter asked her own bedstead to be taken to Madhusudan's room and his bed to be made on it. He, however, would not allow it, saying that he was the master of the house and it was his privilege to undergo hardships, and those who were dependant on him should not be deprived of their comforts. Self-denial, self-sacrifice and service to others were the guiding principles of this great man. Unless one came in close contact with him and saw him in his daily life, it was not possible to see in full the beauty of this noble soul. His heart was full of love for his fellow beings. He would do anything to make those happy whom he loved and would tend them in their illness with a mother's care.

FRIENDSHIP WITH THE MAHARAJA OF KEONJHAR :

The late Maharaja of Keonjhar and he were fast friends. This friendship began when the old Maharaja was in trouble with his subjects. The subjects rose in arms against him and were determined to kill him. The Maharaja ran away from his state with only one faithful servant and without any money or personal belongings. In the middle of the night he arrived at Madhubabu's house and told him of his plight and implored his help which Madhusudan readily promised to give. He lent him money, got clothes for him, rented a house, furnished it and lodged the Maharaja there. The Maharaja gave a handnote to Madhusudan for the money he lent and also promised to pay him a large sum as his professional fee. Madhusudan tore the handnote to pieces, saying--- "Maharaja, if you do not get back your State you will not be in a position to pay my dues, so the paper would be of no avail to me and if you get back your State and fail to keep your promise, I would not be a poor man for having helped a Maharaja of my country". This cemented their friendship which lasted till death. The Maharaja had implicit faith in Madhusudan and loved and respected him. Shortly

before his death the Maharaja came to Cuttack and during his stay there had frequent talks with Madhusudan in course of which he expressed his gratefulness to him in the most cordial terms saying that he owed his very life to him. He added that it would be his best endeavour to see that the grand old man of Orissa was not required to work for his bread in his old days. But unfortunately Heaven willed it otherwise and the Maharaja died all on a sudden shortly after this meeting. Had the Maharaja of Keonjhar lived a few years more, the Utkal Tannery of Madhusudan would not have been a thing of past today. After the Maharaja's death, his son Gopinath Bhunj Deo succeeded him. Gopinath and his Rani lived at Cuttack for several years. Madhusudan looked after them and helped them many a time in their troubles. Both of them were like his children and called him father".

One evening while Madhusudan was very busy with a brief, he was told that the Rani of Keonjhar, the mother of the present Raja, was very ill and wanted to see him. Madhusudan at once left his office and walked to the Keonjhar Bungalow and found the Rani in a critical state. The Rani recognised Madhu Babu and the young Raja told him, "Father stay with me, do not leave me. If you do so, I shall die". She had not taken any food or medicine the whole day and nobody had succeeded in making her so. But the touch of Madhusudan's soft hand on her forehead and his gentle voice made her say that she would take her food only from his hands and that from his house. Madhusudan had a slight fever on and was feeling far from well, but forgot all about his own ailment and throughout the night he sat near her bed, gave her medicine every two hours, fed her and comforted and soothed her by putting his hand on her head. After that Madhusudan would go there daily and feed her with her own hand until the Rani was well again. He valued human life. He used to say that if through carelessness or ignorance a life was destroyed it could never be brought back. So long as there is life one should try to preserve it as life is a valuable gift from God.

TIKAYET OF KANIKA :

Madhusudan was a great friend also to the Tikayet Shoilendra Narayan Bhunj Deo of Kanika. Reference has been made elsewhere to the great friendship that subsisted between Madhusudan and Kanika

Raj family. The Tikayet's parents had lost all their previous children on account of which they were unhappy. During his childhood the Tikayet had constant attacks of bronchitis and was never quite well. He was therefore brought up at Madhusudan's house by his daughter under his tender care. Even amidst his multifarious duties he would not forget the presence of this child in his house. He would leave his work and come up and see the child. When the child was not well he would personally advise his daughter what ought to be done. When he went to Delhi in 1914, to attend the Viceroy's Council, this little boy of 5 years went with him, leaving his parents behind. Though Madhusudan had no children of his own yet he knew all about children's diseases from a study of them. Any one who saw Tikayet in those days, would not think he was the Raja's son but he was related to Madhusudan. Many a night this oldman would sit at the bedside of the Tikayet and watch the symptoms of his illness. He loved to have the child in his bedroom and when he rested in his chair with a hooka in hand he would talk to the Tikayet and try to instil into his baby heart that God had an object in his life and he must learn to do his duty. His desire was that the Tikayet would one day occupy a leading place in Orissa and he always gave lessons to train his little mind. When he was in his death-bed the Tikayet came to see him several times. Madhusudan would always smile at him and tenderly say something humorous to bring a smile on the Tikayet's face.

A GOOD ENTERTAINER :

In the early days of his stay at Cuttack he used to entertain his friends at a musical party once every week. He was a lover of music. He had most of the musical instruments in his house and every Saturday evening his colleagues in the profession and friends would come to his place and listen to good music. After the music the guests would be entertained to dinner at which the most delectable dishes made by a Kashmiri Brahmin cook were served. He had the reputation of keeping the best table at Cuttack and was famous for his hospitality. Great in mind and large in heart, he did everything on a grand scale. He often said that there is a easy way of satisfying and it is through his palate. Man is never satisfied with anything he gets, but when he is fed, he is sure to reach a stage of satisfaction after which he does not desire any more food.

Another notable trait of his character was that he took it for granted that a man was good unless he proved to be otherwise. He looked upon money as no better than mere dust and never cared much for it. Menial servants took advantage of this and robbed him, but he would never believe that they were dishonest. He used to be angry with his daughter if she told him that his menial servants robbed him. He had a child-like faith in the goodness of human nature and would not believe anything against anyone.

FRIEND OF POOR PEOPLE:

He is an example of innate greatness. He had a beautiful drawing room, which was furnished with great care by his daughter at considerable expense. One day about a dozen persons came to see him on some matter. They were bare-footed and walked through the dusty road of Cuttack. They came in with their feet covered with red dust and their clothes were shabby. Madhusudan asked his bearer to take these men to the drawing room, where they made the carpet dirty with the dust of the road and the cushioned chairs were soiled by their use. He did not mind this in the least but welcomed them as his brothers and sat and talked to them like a friend. They came from a village to seek his help against the oppression of a Zamindar. He listened to their grievances and promised to help them. After a couple of hours they left. His daughter, when she returned home, found the drawing room in a mess. Learning the cause of it she went to her father and asked him to instruct the bearer not to show in all sorts of visitors to the drawing room. Madhusudan gravely said that those people were his friends. They were poor and could not afford to have a car like her rich friends. If she wanted him, she must not grudge them. If she wanted a new carpet, she could have one but he could not give an order like the one she wanted him to give. Since that day his daughter gave up addressing him on such matters, knowing the nature of his father.



XII

LAST PHASE OF AN EVENTFUL CAREER

After his retirement from the Ministership in 1923, Madhusudan stayed for one year in Patna. His daughter Shoilabala and her sister Sudhansubala were both with him and the later was practising at Patna High Court. He also practised for a few months in Patna.

LECTURE ON DIGNITY OF LABOUR :

On the 17th February of 1924, at the Bihar Young Men's Institute Hall, Patna a lecture on the "Dignity of Labour" was delivered by Madhusudan before a large gathering. The Hon'ble Justice Sir John A.S. Bucknill of the Patna High Court presided, and many distinguished men were present. In introducing Madhusudan the President said, "He is a man who by his own energy and perseverance has built up an industrial concern which I have had the pleasure and honour of seeing with what I may really call astonished eyes. He is one of those who knows what labour is. He has done it himself and he has, as I say, all the qualifications which made the "dignity of labour". In his own person he has dignified it. The Hon'ble Sir Syed Fakiruddin, in proposing a vote of thanks to Madhusudan said, "I have known Mr. Das for many years, but before I visited the Utkal Tannery in the year 1921 I did not know he was a born industrialist. When I worked with him in the Bengal Legislative Council . I knew him as a generous patriot, I knew him as a scholar, I knew him as an efficient lawyer, but my visit to Cuttack in 1921 convinced me that he was also an industrialist. We ought to try our best to keep this industry alive; we ought to encourage people to join the Ravenshaw College and learn technical labour. I congratulate the Secretary for selecting the subject." The Dignity of Labour" and the lecturer Mr. Das, because it is in the fitness of things that at present we have got a Labour Ministry and that a lecture should be delivered on the "Dignity of Labour".

MADHUSUDAN'S SATISFACTION AT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF HIS DAUGHTER AND SUDHANSUBALA :

In 1924 Madhusudan left Patna and came back to Cuttack leaving his daughter behind. Shoila Bala was engaged there in various public activities and found in Bihar ample opportunities to serve the cause of her country. Originally Bengal, Bihar and Orissa formed the Bengal Province, Orissa was the Cinderella of the three sisters and even now, Bihar claims to be the more advanced sister as regards the recognition of women, but the fact remains that it was a lady from Orissa who was the first to claim distinctions in each of the following : the first lady Commissioner in a Municipality, the first lady Honorary Magistrate in India, the first woman to be nominated Fellow of the Patna University and member of the Syndicate, the first non-official Lady Member in Secondary Board of Education, University Delegacy, the first Lady Member of the Governing Body of the Prince of Wales Medical College, the first lady in India to contest a seat for the Legislative Council as a Representative of the Patna University and the only lady in India to file an Election Petition and win the case. This gave great satisfaction to Madhusudhan. Her early education in Orissa in his house equipped her for various activities in public life which women's education in India has, to this day, failed to a large extent to accomplish. Madhusudan was very pleased with his daughter's achievements, especially when he found that she, though not a lawyer, undertook to appear in a case on behalf of a Rani before the Board of Revenue in U.P. The success of the two sisters in their public life cheered up Madhusudan in the closing days of his life which gradually became more and more full of disappointment due to other causes. While Miss Sudhansu Bala Hazra opened up the doors of Law for the women of India, Shoila Bala became prominent in various public activities. Madhusudan looked upon these two sisters as the very symbol of success in the uplift of womanhood of Orissa and in them he found the realisation of one of the dearest dreams of his life. This consoled him in his old age.

GATHERING CLOUDS :

In the summer of 1924, Madhusudan left Patna for Cuttack because he was very much involved with his Tannery.

The Utkal Tannery cost him tremendous amount ---- it was a

well high sum of six lakh rupees. Over and above spending a large part of his earning, he had to mortgage his residential house in Cuttack, the Tannery itself and incur other debts. The Tannery had by this time acquired a reputation, enjoyed by very few other industrial concerns in India. Its products, especially lizard skins, were much prized in foreign markets and there was a great demand for them far and wide. It was at this stage that the great concern was about to collapse just for want of funds. In 1925, Madhusudan was pressed hard by his creditors and was in trouble. Even with the best of his efforts no more funds could be found and the Tannery was put to auction at the Court Sale.

SALE OF THE TANNERY :

A price of Rs.265000/- was estimated by an expert at the instance of the court, but there was no buyer found. So, 40 acres of the freehold land, workshop building, machinery, hides, leather goods, the managers quarters etc. all were sold for the paltry sum of Rs. 65,000/-. This ruined Madhusudan financially and his life's ambition to regenerate the country's industry was shattered. He not only lost his Tannery, but along with it everything he had on earth to call his own except his honour and self-respect. The great loss, however, was the price he had to pay for his attempts to develop the industries of his country.

MADHU SMRITI:

It had been said above that his residential house at Cuttack was mortgaged. The house, on the construction of which he had spent from sixty to seventy thousand rupees, was mortgaged to the Maharaja of Parlakhemundi for Rs 25,000/-. Madhusudan had repaid the greater part of principal, and Rs. 25,000/- was yet due to the creditor, covering a paltry amount of the principal, and much of the interest. The Maharaja got a decree for Rs. 25,000/- on his mortgage and wanted to have the execution of his decree by selling Madhusudan's house. The Maharaja did not like to buy the house for himself, but wanted the law to take its own course. No body in Orissa offered to buy this house, which would mean expulsion of this old man from his old associations. As the Maharaja was most anxious to have his money by selling the house, Madhusudan was quite prepared to leave it. At this time Shoila Bala was in Patna and when she heard that Maharaja was going to have execution of the decree by selling Madhusudan's house

and the old man, who spent his princely fortune for the good of his country and for the uplift of the Oriya People and who looked upon gold as mere dust, would be driven away from his house for a mere sum of Rs. 25,000/-, she at once consulted her brother Chandra Kumar Hazra and her sister Sudhansu Bala to find out means to help the grand old man of Orissa. They bought the decree from the Maharaja without the knowledge of Madhusudan paid the Maharaja Rs.25,000/- in full. Madhusudan did not, therefore, have the misfortune of being displaced from his own house in his old age. When he came to know it, there were tears of gratitude in his eyes, but he told his daughter to sell the house or it would be a white elephant to her future. The day his house was being sold in the Cuttack Civil Court, Madhusudan was arguing a Case in the next room. When he came out of the room he asked Chandra Kumar rather in a casual way what had become of the house which was no longer his and who had purchased it. When he was told what had been done by Chandra Kumar, Sudhansu Bala and Shoila Bala he gave them his blessings with tearful eyes but at the same time he told his daughter that she ought not have locked up her money in buying that house for a mere sentiment, and that, for himself, he could easily have left his house and lived in a small hired one. He also told her that he came to the world with nothing and he would be glad to leave the world with the thought that he had left nothing behind. He told her definitely that he would not live in the house purchased by her until she agreed to accept rent from him. Seeing that her father was determined to pay the rent she had to accept it. Madhusudan felt that it was his duty to provide for his daughter and not to deprive her of her savings from what he had allowed her. He lived in this house till the last and was paying rent till the end.

After his death Shoila Bala named the house "Madhu Smriti" in memory of her father, and the other house which her father built in the same compound for the Orissa Art Wares and where he had spent a few months of his life was named "Madhu Mandir". Madhusudan's living room is still kept just as it was at the time of his death and the room is sacred to Shoila Bala and Sudhansu Bala in his beloved memory. The bed has been kept as it was and all the little articles in his daily use have been preserved there with love and devotion.

HIS INSOLVENCY :

But the last straw on the camel's back was yet to come. The situation soon became more grave as the other creditors pressed their claim. Had the Tannery been sold at the price fixed by the court, Madhusudan could have easily satisfied all his creditors, but it was not to be so. He was destined to have his full cup of trouble and sorrow. He placed himself entirely in the hands of his Heavenly Father and had such great and unshakable faith in God that it did not affect him, in the least to lose all. He knew that God was his guide all through his life, he would not forsake him during the closing days when he needed Him most. He knew he had done nothing wrong or dishonourable. Fate had decreed against him and he was ruined in the cause of his country. So he had no other alternative than to place all his earthly possessions before the court. The righteousness which he showed is rare and remarkable. He wrote to his daughter in Patna, to send him whatever he had left in Patna to Cuttack to be surrendered to the court. All he had, lands, houses, furniture was his joy and pride, and for which he had spent nearly half a lakh of rupees, were placed at the disposal of the court. He loved his Library very much as he had spent the greater part of his time here. He had a vast collections, not only of Law Books, Medical and Scientific Literature but also modern Literature and Speeches of great men of all ages and all countries. Few other men in his position would have been able to survive the shock caused by the loss, but as he made God his daily companion, he feared nothing and God gave him the courage and strength to bear his trial.

There was nobody in Orissa to buy his beautiful Library. In the absence of a buyer it was going for Rs. 3000/- which the Raja Sahib of Kanika offered to the court, but Sudhansu Bala with the Raja's permission offered a hundred rupees more and got the sanction of the court to buy the Library which she did with the view that this great man, if he ever practised again to earn his daily bread, must stand in need of a Library. In weal or woe, the master minds in the Library would be his best friends. She also bought most of Madhusudan's furniture, costly or otherwise, as they had association of him. She wanted to have the house look as it did before this catastrophe fell on

Madhusudan. She spent all her savings to bring a little comfort to Madhusudan so that he might live in his old surroundings and die in their midst. Shoila Bala and Sudhansu Bala thought, that was the time when they could show their love and gratitude to the man who sacrificed everything for the good of his country and people. Though these two girls were not of his own race or blood, they were deeply indebted to him for his love and all that he had done for them. They could not but feel his greatness even in his adversity and their love and admiration of him made them to do their utmost to give some relief to him in his distress. He loved his adopted daughters who hailed from Bengal and made his country their own.

He never felt any want in his life as God was always with him and gave him strength, power and ability to work for his daily bread. He was honourably discharged by the court and before he was discharged he took up his profession of law and earned money and tried to pay off his creditors. A man is best known in his adversity. Madhusudan came out in full splendour during the days when fortune had ceased to smile on him. The following two letters from the Chief Justice and a judge of Patna High Court will show in what esteem he was held by all even when he was penniless.

High Court, PATNA
The 18th March, 1928

Dear Mr. Das,

I am sorry that after a notable career you should have found yourself handicapped by financial worries, but I feel sure that your adversity has in no way shaken your faith in the all seeing wisdom of providence, or human nature or you would not write to me such an encouraging letter. It is always a pleasure to be told that one has been able, even in a small way, to assist or encourage others through life's difficult journey, and yours has not always been easy.

We frequently see Miss Das and she is taking a great part in the public life of the province and is always full of energy and cheerfulness. I was very glad she was selected to the Syndicate of the University and I am sure she will with her clear perception and active mind prove a great asset to that body....

My wife joins me in wishing you all happiness and good luck for the future and I hope to see before long an account of your career written by yourself.

Believe me,

Very sincerely yours,
Dawson Miller.

HIGH COURT, PATNA
The 1st June, 1928

My dear Mr. Das,

I was delighted to receive your letter on return last night from Rohtas where my wife and I had a very enjoyable, though brief visit.

Thank you so much for your kind congratulations on my appointment to a permanent judgeship. I appreciate them very highly indeed as coming from you, a very old and valuable friend, and as coming from Orissa which has a very warm place in my heart. I trust that it may be vouchsafed to me to do useful work for the people of all parts of the province in which I have now spent 28 years ; but I think most of the three south judgeship comprising Orissa and Chhota Nagpur.

I have been thinking of writing to you during the last two months to urge you (or encourage you) to write your autobiography. I trust you will find time to write (or dictate) it. The account of your career, your aims and your achievements should come from you---otherwise much that is invaluable will be lost to Orissa, to India and to the Empire. You have had an uphill fight from the outset and the history of it will be precious in itself and a guide to others carrying on the work. I trust, you will favourably consider the matter.

You mention your insolvency: I sympathise with you deeply in the mental distress involved. But we all know that the insolvency itself is perfectly above board, and moreover is the result of your patriotic struggle for your native land, of which others are reaping the advantage and will do so increasingly as the years go on. So do not be unduly depressed over it : none of your old friends value you any less for the accident of fortune.

My wife and I cordially reciprocate your good wishes for the New Year. May 1928 see you well and happy and may fickle fortune return to you abundantly.

Yours sincerely
T.S. Macpherson.

After Madhusudan had gone all through these troubles and passed through the insolvency hazards in court, his daughter and Sudhansu Bala wanted him to live a quiet life, so that he could have a few more years with them, but a man who had been active all his life and has always in harness, always doing something and thinking for the good of his country, could not live an idle life. He was greatly concerned about the future of his country and was waiting to hear the creation of the new province. He knew that his dream was going to be fulfilled; that a new province was coming in and he felt happy about it.

At this period of life, he was rather unwilling to meet the friends of his earlier life. He felt that when a man was down on his luck and in adversity his rich and influential friends might not like to know him or mix with him, but he was wrong. An eminent judge of Patna High Court was a friend of him and when he came to Cuttack to a Circuit Court and found that Madhusudan would not call on him, as he would do before, he himself came down instead to see Madhusudan at the latter's house. The judge told Madhusudan that no disgrace was attached to him and he himself wanted to be in Madhusudan's place. The judge asked Madhusudan how many people in his position, could have an opportunity to do what Madhusudan had done in his life and said that there was no shame. He admired Madhusudan the way in which he bore his troubles. The judge added that Madhusudan had risen high in the estimation of his European and Indian friends alike, both official and non-official. They all spoke highly of his life's work for his country and had great admiration and respect for him. During the next session of the Circuit Court at Cuttack a European judge of the High Court wanted to see Madhusudan, but he was not willing to go. Knowing this, the judge wrote to him "If Mohammed does not come to the mountain, the mountain must come to Mohammed. I am coming to see you at 6 O'clock in the evening with Mr. Justice Fazl Ali". So Madhusudan lost nothing to the estimation of people by going through insolvency. He never

sought honour or respect from others. They followed him everywhere even in his adversity.

HIS FAITH IN GOD :

During the later part of his life he was always ailing, but he cheerfully bore all his suffering. His faith in God was a wonderful thing and this sustained him at this time amidst all the odds he had to encounter. Even in his adversity he could not give up his generousities and charity; he would quietly help the needy Oriya students without the knowledge of his daughter and distribute alms to the poor every Sunday. One day his daughter asked him not to waste his hard-earned money any more on anybody, but to think of himself, so that he could have the little comforts which he denied to himself all his life. That day he had not a single rupee in his cashbox and there was no immediate prospect of work and so no chance of getting money soon as the Court was closed for the Puja holidays. Madhusudan, however, cheerfully told her not to worry about money as his Father, who knew his needs would surely look after him. He would feed him in his old age. He had been with him just when he did not believe his words. He regretted that she had not the same faith in God as he had. He then got up and down and went to his office room. The morning post came soon after, and with it he received an insured letter containing currency notes for Rs.2000/- from an old client. He thanked God, and came up to his daughter with smiling eyes and showed her notes, telling her that seeing him in trouble his Heavenly Father had sent him the money and he asked his daughter never to tell him anything against his Father. She was now convinced that her father would never be in want, and that God would look after him.

ON THE ORISSA ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE :

In spite of his poor health Madhusudan served on the Orissa Administration Committee. Mr.J.A.Hubback (later Sir John Hubback, the Governor of Orissa) was the president of the committee and wrote to Miss Das after her father's death that he had seen him a few days before his death, and had been afraid that Mr.Das was seriously ill, that the end was not far off, and he added that it was something to be thankful, for that he was able to use, almost up to the end of his life, his brain and energy in the cause which he had so long at heart, the certainty of Orissa Province. Mr.Hubback was greatly impressed in

October, 1933, by the contribution which Madhusudan was able to make to the solution of the problem of which the Orissa Administration Committee was confronted with. It was sad to think, wrote Mr. Hubback, that he was not able to see the final inauguration of the new Orissa province ; but his name, as the principal maker of Orissa, would, always, be associated with it. This letter of Mr. Hubback to Miss Das shows how much he valued his last services for his country.

CHARITY EVEN IN ADVERSITY :

There was a great flood in Orissa in 1933, and a fund was started for the relief of the famine stricken people. A few gentlemen came to Madhusudan for subscription. He had no money except the sum of two hundred rupees that he had borrowed from a friend to meet some urgent need, and was expecting to get money from a client. He expressed regret that he could not give them what he would like to, as he was down in luck, but he would be glad if they would accept the paltry sum of Rs.50/- as a mere token of his sympathy with the afflicted. The profound impression this had on the minds of the collectors can well be imagined.

Another touching incident of his life was when the Chairman of Cuttack Municipality asked him for the gift of a tubewell for the poor people who were suffering from cholera for want of good drinking water. Forgetting his adversity he at once promised but after that he fell ill, was down on bed and had not the strength to work any more to earn money. This unfulfilled promise was preying on his mind, and yet he did not like to ask his daughter or Sudhansu Bala to give him money for the promised gift. But his Heavenly Father knew his heart and gave him money to pay his debt of honour, for on his death bed he received news that he had won in a lottery. He got rupees nine hundred just before his death. Out of this he gave one hundred rupees to the Chairman of the Municipality on the eve of his death, upon which he felt relieved and cheerful and then told his daughter all about it.



XIII

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

Learning that he was ill, and was getting weaker day by day, his daughter came from Patna on the 22nd January 1934. Madhusudan was happy to see her and said that his days were numbered and that it would not have been possible for him to have gone to Patna to wish her goodbye and he was therefore glad that she herself had come. He expressed his eagerness to know all about the Bihar earthquake, which happened on the 16th January, and had a detailed account of it from Shoila Bala. Both Shoila Bala and Sudhansu Bala were with him till the last and their brothers—Chandra Kumar and Jitendra Kumar came down to be with him during his last days. He was resigned to his fate and knew that his end was near. To the people who came to see him, he wished goodbye with folded hands and asked for their forgiveness for any wrong he might have done to them. His thoughts were always with Orissa and its people. The Boy Scouts came to give him their last salute and silently stood by his bed. He blessed them with all his heart. Some of his Oriya friends who dearly loved him were with him, day and night, till the end. He could not help making witty remarks which made his sorrowful friends smile, even on his deathbed. He would not take any food solid or liquid. His daughter was anxious, that he should take some food, if only a little, which would revive his strength, but he would smile and say that it was of no use and that he would never be able to work for his livelihood, and lest he might be a burden to them; God was taking him away to give him rest and peace. Many ladies brought their babies and prayed for his blessings on them. Seeing Chandra Kumar kneeling at his bedside, he told him not to take so much trouble. Chandra said that it was no trouble to him, as they were all very anxious that he should be well again. He replied that his life could no longer be of any use or gain to them or to any individual

though it might, however, be of some use to his people or to his Province. Sudhansu Bala asked him why he was then always wishing to leave them and whether he was not eager to live to see the creation of the new province. He smiled and said that he asked his Father to let him live, to see the new Province, but his Father wished him to rest in peace in his Heavenly Home. Pandit Nilakantha Das came to see him twice, and discussed with him the future of Orissa. The Pandit asked him for a message to the Oriya people. Madhusudan said 'Tell them to clean their inner-self first, otherwise their exteriors can not be cleaned'. On the 31st Jan. 1934 the doctors gave up all hopes of his life.

He was then gradually getting weaker and weaker till he could hardly speak, yet in the evening when Sudhansu Bala began to recite the hymn he loved, he started to sing it himself. With a strong voice he sang the following verse with a smile on his face and his hands on his breast.

I heard the voice of Jesus say
Come unto me and rest.
Lay down thou weary one, lay down,
Thy head upon My breast.

All his friends, who were standing around his bed, were surprised to hear him sing. Sudhansu Bala asked him, whether he would like her to read the Bible to him and on his request she started reading the 23rd Psalm. When she had read two or three verses, he asked her to stop and said that his case was very different from David's— David was in trouble and asked God to help him, whereas he had finished with his troubles and was eagerly waiting to go Home, to his Father. Friends, who were present, realised that Madhusudan was then gradually passing away though he was fully conscious till the end.

At about 11 p.m. Shoila Bala informed him that the Rani of Kanika with her daughter-in-law had come to pay their respects to him. She asked all the friends to leave the room, the Rani being a purdah lady. When the two ladies came and stood by his bedside they were weeping. Madhusudan comforted them and caught the Rani's hand and wished her goodbye. It was a very pathetic scene and to avoid further excitement which would harm Madhusudan, Shoila Bala took ladies out of the room. Towards morning he appeared slightly

better and opened his eyes and smiled. On being questioned by Sudhansu Bala, he said that he had seen a very old man with white beard and a pleasant smile standing near his bed. "Nothing could keep me here now and I must go " he added.

On the morning of the 1st February, the Civil Surgeon found him much better but still weak and asked Madhusudan to exert his will and eat to keep up his strength. But Madhusudan smiled and asked the Surgeon whether in the medical science there was anything to retain the life of a man when the call came from his Creator to leave this world. To let his friends have their consolation on the hopes raised by the doctor, he asked his daughter to feed him and carry out all instructions as given by the doctor, knowing fully well in his heart of hearts that they would be of no avail. He continued in the same state on the 2nd of February but on the 3rd he requested Sudhansu Bala not to worry him any further with food or medicines as his end was near, and he wanted complete rest. He did not speak much but smiled occasionally. Towards evening there was a perceptible change in him, though he was looking much better his body was gradually getting colder and the pulse began to sink. All his friends surrounded his bedside. Just an hour before his death, his daughter called him and he responded feebly. She gave him a teaspoonful of water, every 10 minutes. At 1.30.a.m. he took his last few drops of water and at 1.35.a.m. his soul left his body and was blessed with well earned Eternal Peace. A heavenly smile shone on his face as he passed away.

From early morning the people of the whole town began pouring in from all sides. The news of his death quickly spread from the town to the mofussil and the result was a regular trek of people rushing in, to pay their great leader and to have a last glimpse of Madhusudan, the uncrowned king of Orissa.

His body was taken from his bedroom and laid in state in his beautiful marbled drawing room on the ground floor where everybody from the Commissioner to the poorest tramp assembled to have his last glimpse. Even purdah ladies brought their children, to have a touch of his feet. The public of Orissa wanted to take his remains in its last journey in state round the town as thousands of men and women wished to have his "darshan".

Shoila Bala complied with their request, and made arrangements

for his remains to be put into the coffin at the burial ground. A huge procession with the bier bedecked with flowers and garlands started from "Madhusmriti" his last residence. Every now and then the bier was placed on the roadside to let the people who came rushing to have the last "darshan" and to pay tributes by offering flowers and camphor garlands which were placed on the bier. Amongst these flower and camphor garlands some were brought from the temple of Jaggannath by freinds. At last the bier arrived at the Government Cemetery at Tulasipur where his remains were placed in the coffin and after the funeral service, he was laid to rest in a most beautiful spots in the ground.

Thus ended the life of Madhusudan, a life dedicated to loving and faithful service to God and to His Creation, the life of a true patriot, of a sincere, simple, faithful and a devout Christian, a great son of the Great Heavenly Father.

Requiscat in peace.



XIV

L'ENVOI

"The end crowns all".... Shakespeare.

The Whole of India is pulsating today with new life and ardour. If the historian whose business is to trace the various currents and cross-currents which have brought about this new spirit of nationalism, which is sweeping across this vast sub-continent like a mighty wave, will pause and think, and then he will find that the wave of nationalism has not altogether been a detached factor. Many other earlier factors of great import had been silently at work, though they were left unnoticed at the time.

Madhusudan, one of the greatest Oriya, was one such masterful personality. He was directly responsible for the regeneration of his great province. He heralded the Orissan renaissance and breathed into the heart of his race a wonderful life. He planted the seed of nationalism, which is a flourishing tree today. His life's mission was to create Orissa as a separate administrative province, but unfortunately he is no more in the land of the living to see his great dream realised. Public memory is criminally short and, how many of us know that the obstacle standing in the way of Indian ladies to practise as full-fledged lawyers was removed through the indefatigable strife of Madhusudan Das ? How many know that he was the great precursor of the present Kisan movement and organisation of labour ? How many of us know that the new orientation in the Congress policy of enlisting the support the masses was first suggested and brought into the sphere of practical politics by this silent Oriya worker ? Again how many of us know that though Oriya by birth, Madhusudan was a Christian convert ? Orissa has been a land of deep-rooted conservatism: a Christian convert naturally forfeits the confidence of his people. But how many of us

know that inspite of this great and serious handicap Madhusudan was recognised as "the uncrowned king of Orissa", the dictator of his people in every aspect of their life, though refreshingly free from much of the odium that clings to the term 'Dictator', as his personality was broad-based on the hearts of the people, among whom he fought and died like a Roman of the classical age.

In the fact he was more a Roman than an Indian in dreaming dreams and realising them. Even in his appearance he looked like Julius Caesar, thin, spare and measured in appearance, eating too little and thinking too much. Like Caesar again, he was a jurist of eminence. Like the great Roman Emperor, he had always big schemes on the anvil. Some of them were fulfilled in his life time, some are being fulfilled today. Orissa is marvellously expanding herself in various ways : in economic, political and social spheres. The people have become self-conscious and the way is not far distant when they will march shoulder to shoulder with the neighbouring races with whom the cultural contact for centuries had been more than vital.

But the pioneer is often forgotten within his life time. We have scanned in the foregoing pages, all the years of his stimulating life. He covered the best and most fruitful years of two centuries and yet, he was no narrow dogmatist or Pharisee. Like a true born-politician he knew how to make the best use of present opportunities. He understood fully well that his province can proceed on her onward march of progress only through economic regeneration. He showed the way in this direction, but unfortunately it was a single handed struggle and when he laid down his arms, he was a pauper.

We shall recount here, in passing a brief history of Orissa and her resources. The land dates back to hoary antiquity. It received the Aryans sometime in 3,000 B.C, saw the fusion of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Vaisnavism in different ages. As a maritime people the Oriyas traded in the past with Greater India including Java, Siam, Cambodia, Malabar and even Africa. The rich imports through trade contributed a great deal to the introduction of many fine patterns of architectural monuments, which now lie scattered all over Orissa. The

great river Baitarani (the Indian Styx) is far famed in Sanskrit books. The time worn elephant figure of Dhauli teach us the noble missionary activities of Emperor Asoka.

The temple of Lord Jagannath (1076-1147 A.D.), where we find a harmonious fusion of Hinduism and Buddhism, the noble Saivite temple at Bhubaneswar, the fine Buddhist and Jain cave-temples of Udaigiri and Khandagiri, the marvellously wrought temple of Konark are some of the great architectural monuments of Orissa. It is a regular pageant of history stretching from the Mauryan age to the 6th century A.D. One is amazed to follow the golden triangle of Orissan art. We read a fine descriptions of the celebrated car-festival of Jagannath, written during the beginning of the fifth century A.D, by the Chinese traveller Fa-Hein.

The province enjoyed unparalleled prosperity till 1568 A.D. when the Oriyas lost their independence and were conquered by the Muslims. After a century and a half of Muslim rule the Marahattas occupied the province for another century till the British occupied it in 1803. Under the East India Company Orissa was parcelled out in four provinces, lost her entente, individuality and glory and remained neglected. Thirty years agitation brought the present Orissa province into fruition in 1936.

The present Orissa province has an area of 32,000 square miles and a population of 83 lakhs. It has an income of 163 lakhs of which 40 lakhs happen to be central subvention. Per capita expenditure resolved to Rs.2/- of which only annas 2/- and pies 3 is spent on nation building. There is no communal problem here as such. According to Sir Samuel Hoare, it is the only homogeneous province. The foremost problem that Oriyas face, is the appalling poverty of the masses. Mahatma Gandhi once remarked "Orissa is the epitome of India's helplessness".

But the natural elements, that go to make a nation great and prosperous, are there. Nature has kept hidden vast treasures here in the shape of forests, mines, rivers, and good soil. Coal, iron, mica, manganese and many other materials can be dug out of the womb of

the earth. Nearly three-fourths of the total area is filled with forests and hills. For hundreds of miles together, the Bay of Bengal forms the eastern boundary of the province. So in the midst of plenty the people are being starved to death.

For a long time the nation required a leader. Madhusudan flourished at a psychological moment when Orissa's needs were sorest. He taught this ancient nation with a hallowed past the ideal of manhood, honour and self-respect. Large hearted and genial, he was a nationalist of nationalists. He wanted to rouse his race and shepherded it to a prosperous destiny. Posterity will judge best how he achieved it.



XV

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH OF MADHUSUDAN

The 4th of February, 1935 was the first death anniversary of the "Grand Old Man of Orissa".

All offices, schools, colleges and courts in Cuttack were closed at 2 pm., so that people might attend the memorial service near the Monument raised in honour of Madhusudan at the Cuttack Cemetery.

A large procession representing all classes of people marched to the cemetery. Boy Scouts carrying wreaths of flowers in their hands were followed by women students, lawyers, artisans and others. All stood round the impressive monument that had been erected to the memory of Madhusudan. Shoila Bala, Sudhanshu Bala and their three brothers had shared the cost of the monument with Sir Rajendra Narayan Bhunj Deo, Raja Bahadur of Kanika and his family. Fourteen different communities participated in this solemn ceremony and the monument bears inscriptions of their tributes of love and devotion to this departed great leader. Marble panels bear loving homage from artisans, students, Oriya brethren of Ganjam, women of Utkal, the Zamindars of Utkal, the Muhammedan Association, the Marwari Samaj, the Cuttack Christian Community, Bengali Residents of Orissa, friends of Madhusudan and the members of Cuttack Bar. There was a marble tablet from Mr. Sachidananda Sinha of Bihar with the following inscription: "In affectionate memory of Madhusudan Das — a great Oriya, a patriotic Indian, a devout Christian, a lover of Bihar and a distinguished Minister under Reforms". Another marble tablet was presented by Mr. Justice S.N. Mallik of Calcutta containing the following inscription : "To Madhusudan the just, determined and the brave but selfless son of Orissa— an affectionate friend and admirer". The commemoration services was held by the Commissioner of Orissa Division at the foot of the monument where thousands of people had

gathered to pay their tributes of love and respect with garlands of flowers to Madhusudan. Two hymns were sung, Rev. Mr. Lazarus took the prayers. Mr. E. S. Hornee, the Commissioner of Orissa Division, delivered the following speech—

"My friends,

We meet together today, men and women of all creeds and ranks and occupations, to do honour to the memory of one who was a great servant of the people and great lover of all classes of people. His life was devoted to their cause and he strove for recognition of his race and country as a nation, as an equal and honoured partner in the league of nations which is the commonwealth of India. And in death it might well be said of him, in the words of the Christian Burial Service, "Now shall this mortal put on mortality".

He ever obeyed the command, "fight the good fight, with all the might", the fight against the power of evil, against injustice, humiliation and inhumanity. Manfully he led the way towards the promised land of Self-Governing Orissa, and if it was not given to him to enter it, at the end he stood, like the dying Moses on the highest peak of Pisgah, in full view of it below him in the certain assurance that it should be the heritage of the people and so could cry —

" O Grave, where is thy sting ?

O Death, where is thy victory ?

He is not dead: He layeth down.

His sword and cross to take his crown"

Let us not forget that we owe him more than honour to his memory. He strove not for his own honour, but for the honour of his Nation, so to dedicate ourselves to the future of that Nation.

Above all he served in that selfless devotion which is perfect love. The union of Orissa by map and constitution will be simply a shadow of reality unless it is to be union of hearts, a spiritual brotherhood of all, working in selfless harmony for the common goal, and we shall be unworthy of his love unless we also love."

THE MONUMENT OF HIS GRAVE.

The Raja Sahib of Kanika read out the inscription on the pedestal and on the slab and placed a wreath. The different communities read out the inscriptions contributed by each and placed wreaths. The Director of Industry, Bihar and Orissa Mr. S. Lal was present there

and, on behalf of Bihar, read out Mr. Sinha's inscription and placed a wreath.

The whole Monument was covered with wreaths of flowers. When the men had all left after the function Hindu and Zenana Ladies came to pay their respects to the memory of Madhusudan. They also placed the flowers on the Monument and bowed their heads before it as a mark of respect and love to the great "Madhu Babu" whose last remains were buried there and who, they were sure, would always shower blessings on them from above.



Appendix-1:

MADHUSUDAN : THE FOUNDER OF THE UTKAL UNION CONFERENCE

No one knows more intimately the history of the first Utkal Union Conference than myself. How it was originated and why it was originated very, few know the cause of it.

In 1902, my late father and late Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee had a great discussion about the difficult problem of Orissa in the Grand Hotel, Calcutta, during X'mas week. Orissa was then connected with Bihar & Bengal and was in minority. Orissa suffered educationally, economically, industrially and socially and was very backward and my father wanted that the Indian National Congress should take up the question of Orissa that the Oriya speaking tracts should be amalgamated as a Province. But Sir Surendra Nath was not in favour in taking up Provincial question in the Congress and so my father parted from the National Congress.

He started the Utkal Union Conference. The later part of the year 1903 was mostly devoted in forming the executive committee resolutions etc. Almost daily the meeting of the executive committee was held at Madhusudan's large drawing room at Cuttack. Government officers and non-officials were members of the Committee. I was also a member of the executive committee. The Contractors were engaged to make a pandal at Tulsipur at Mr. Das's land. I was asked to decorate the pandal and look after the comforts of the guests. My father spent a fortune over this Institution, its success in rousing the national consciousness of the Oriyas, vivisected and unconscious, under an alien rule. I formed a volunteer board with 200 local College boys. They did yeomen service under my supervision to make the conference a great success. I held many meeting of these boys on the Tennis Court in Madhu Smriti House and formed many Sections such as Pandal, Guest House, railway, traffic, industry, exhibition.etc. etc. and I must say I had great pleasure in doing work with these boys. I became

the Commander of the Volunteer Board. A week before the Conference, a Government officer informed at the meeting of the executive committee that all Govt. Officers would resign and would not be able to attend the conference as the then Commissioner of Orissa (an Indian) had issued a Circular that Govt. Servants should not attend the Conference. This news came as a bombshell. Maharaja of Mayurbhanj would preside and all the feudatory Rajas & Zamindars, Govt. officials were invited. No one would be able to come when such a Circular was issued. One evening when the meeting of the executive committee was held at our drawing room, the Commissioner of the Division came to the house and the servant brought him to me and he remarked to me that he would not be able to see me in my glory as a Commander-in-Chief of the Volunteer band. I asked him "why can't he come". He kept silent. I said to him again, "You have issued a circular preventing your officers and others to join the Conference." He said, "You are a little girl and must not ask questions. My lips are sealed." I again said, "Please withdraw the Circular. You know it very well that it is not a political conference and you are very much abused by your own officers and people of the town". He said, "I do not like to discuss the question with you." I kept silent, and then sent for our bearer and ordered him to get the carriage of the Commissioner. The Commissioner felt insulted and said to me that by ordering his carriage I drove him out of our house. I said "No, You are mistaken. You should not be in a house where for nights & days the people were discussing about the Conference and your presence would be misconstrued when you had issued such a circular for Government servants and others not to join the Conference." Without a word he left our house. I went down straight to the meeting and told the members and my father what discussion I had with the Commissioner. There and then it was decided to send a long telegram to the Lt. Governor of Bengal giving him all the resolutions of the Conference and showing that it was not a political conference, and it was not understood why a circular of such a nature should be issued prohibiting Government officers, Rulers and others not to join the conference. It would be death blow to the Oriya aspiration. The Conference was meant to wake up Oriya nationalism and for the welfare of their country. It cost my father a fortune to send the telegram and we waited anxiously two whole days

for its reply but none came to him. On the 3rd morning an urgent letter came from the Commissioner to my father requesting him to see him at once. My father went. The Commissioner was in his Office room. He held a Government letter in his hand and asked my father "Mr. Das you are my friend, why did you not tell me that you were going to send a telegram to the Government. I have been taken into the task by the Government." My father replied, "You never consulted me when you issued a circular knowing fully well that it was not a political conference (as a copy of the resolutions was sent to you) yet you prohibited the Government officers and others not to join it. The conference would be a great failure, not to speak of the great loss, I would sustain. All the Feudatory chiefs would be my guest and arrangements were made for them and there was no alternative for me after your talk with my daughter but to send a telegram to the Governor of Bengal asking why the Oriyas should be punished." The Commissioner said that "this is the letter from the Chief Secy. of Bengal, which you see in my hand. I have been asked to read it to you." The letter says that the Government have got full sympathy with Oriyas' aspiration and for their educational, social, Industrial, economic development and to show the sympathy of the Government the Commissioner was asked to be present as a representative of the Government daily. After this the work of the Conference went on in full swing. The college boys were dear coys, they carried out my order with pleasure and were in great discipline. No one questioned my right to order them. They took me as their leader, we were all brothers. The pandal was tastefully decorated. The guest houses volunteers were in all attention to the comforts of the guests. It was so beautifully managed that even Sir..., then Home member of the Government of Bengal, paid compliments to me that the volunteers did very good work in controlling the traffic. No policeman controlled the traffic or seen anywhere in the conference ground. Volunteers managed all. Maharaja of Mayurbhanj presided. Feudatory chiefs and the others sat on the dias. In the middle of the pandal, a Satranchi was spread, where Harijans and other Schedule caste sat and my father sat with them. All Government officers, Jamidars people and others sat on the chairs. The business of the conference was conducted all in Oriya. I moved a resolution for a girls' school at Cuttack. It was my first

maiden extempore speech. I said " I pray to Mother Utkal that she will kindly listen to my prayer though the prayer I uttered in Bengali as from my infancy I have been nursed by Mother Bengal and in my youth I am finding peace and comfort in the embrace of Mother Utkal. One Universal God is worshipped in different forms, in different provinces and the prayers are uttered in provincial languages but they are all accepted by God. I expect that though in infancy, I was brought up in Bengal, now Utkal will treat me as like one of her dear children. Hitherto female education in Bengal has been encouraged by men only. They do a good deal for us and they understand our necessities to a great extent but women are likely to understand their own want better still. I have had some education so I can claim some knowledge of our want. In ancient India, there were many educated Indian ladies, whose names are household word today. I doubt very much if they could leave an immortal memory had they not acquired education. I do not desire to give manly education to women nor do I like that they should compete for University degree only, but I do desire that women should have education to be the mother of great sons. My proposal is to establish a model girl school at Cuttack where there is none with a standing Committee of ladies alone. No doubt from time to time, we shall require the advice of educated man to guide us in the right path and I have confidence that when we shall approach them they will give us free advice. Before approaching you I consulted many ladies on the subject and they gave me every promise to help me in this cause." After the conference was over the late Motilal Ghosh, the editor of Amrita Bazar Patrika, paid a great compliment to my father. The Utkal Union Conference did yeomen service in creating national outlook among Oriyas reminding them the glorious heritage of the people now down trodden. When I recalled in my mind the huge gathering from all parts of Utkal in the first session of the Utkal Union Conference listening to the magnetic oratory of the G.O.M. with rapt attention and when I recollect the tremendous effect the session had, to bring Orissa to the level of other nation, I can not but feel proud what this one man did for Orissa. Motilal Ghosh told my late father "Madhu Oriya you have taught us (Bengalis) how to capture the imagination of the masses. All your proceedings were in the vernacular of the province which the mass could easily follow. Whereas we in

Bengal in all our conference use English language, naturally we can not make impression on the masses. Henceforth we shall follow your example in addressing conferences in Bengali (the vernacular of the province). Another thing I notice that all the Oriyas including the president wore the "conference pugri". Everyone paid a glowing tribute to the success of the conference. The first industrial exhibition was also opened and was a great success. The exhibition was not an exhibition in the sense in which it is understood all over the world. It was more a demonstration of the working method and the utility of various looms by experts. It also placed before the public view some specimen of the clothes turned out by handlooms. There were many fancy articles and the exhibition was a great success. The exhibition was opened by the then Divisional Commissioner and it was the first exhibition in Cuttack.

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Appendix-II

UTKAL YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION

After the Utkal Union Conference I did not like to disband the volunteers' organisation which was started for the Utkal Union Conference. I found the boys were very keen in doing work for others, so I formed the Utkal Young Men's Association with the volunteer boys. I felt that a healthy Association for students was very much needed to form their physical and moral character. In those days there were no debating societies, no physical culture, and no social culture association and the college authorities did not make any arrangement for them. There was nothing to occupy the students in their spare time.

Through the efforts of my father, the birth of the Association took place in Beharibagh, the house in which he lived when first he came to Cuttack. Two hundred students became the members. The Principal of the Ravenshaw College was the President of the Association. I was the Honorary Secretary with another Professor who became Joint Secretary. All other Professors became honorary members. I used to attend this Association daily from 4.30 to 8 pm.. I arranged for extension lectures and debating classes which were taken by the Professors. Healthy newspapers were subscribed, Tennis, Badminton, Billiards, Ping-Pong and Boating were provided. Every week a lecture was given by a notable person. The Association became very popular with the guardians. Sometimes some fathers of the students asked my advice as to how a refractory boy's attention may be given to studies, or how to reform him. I took great interest in the students. The Association was called the "Students' Friend" by the public.

I feel quite proud when I think of those days spent with the students and also of my influence which helped some bad boys to pass their examinations and change their character. I cared for the welfare of the boys and they were devoted to me.

After a year I broke down in health and in 1905 I was sent to

Hazaribagh for a change and left my Association in charge of the Joint Secretary. My father financed the Association. After a year the Joint Secretary came to my father and said it was impossible for any one of them to give so much time to the Association as I did and the result was the Association becoming less popular and it should be wound up. The Young Men's Association thus had a premature death in 1905 and I shed tears over my baby association.

It seemed strange to many persons at the time how my father allowed me to mix so freely with the students. But my father knew I would be able to manage the students by gentleness and kindness and by showing that I cared for them. This naturally influenced their character. They all brought their troubles to me and I listened to them patiently and tried to help them. Thus I was their mother, sister, aunt and friend.

What a difference between then and now. Now the College provides all the facilities helped by Government aid, but the students have got quite out of hand. Constant strikes, taking part in unwholesome politics, dictating terms to elders and superiors seem to be the present day enjoyable functions of the boys. This is due, I believe, in their taking part in the non-co-operation and civil disobedience movement. It seems difficult now to bring them under healthy control.

[Though Utkal Young Men's Association met an early demise, another organisation with wide networks named 'Central Young Utkal Association' came to the forefront in the year 1905 under the leadership of Pandit Gopabandhu Das. —Editor]



Appendix-III:

A NOTICE

[In this monograph Miss Shoilabala Das claims that she is the adopted daughter of Mr.Madhusudan Das.The following document clarifies their relation and brings home the circumstances under which Miss Shoilabala Hazra became Miss Shoilabala Das.The said 'Notice' had been published in the Oriya weekly 'Utkal Dipika' on 13.10.1900—Editor]

Miss Shoilabala Hazra is the daughter of the late Mrs. Hazra, who was my late wife's god-daughter. After her mother's death I took over Shoilabala with the consent of her father Mr.A.C.Hazra, and since then she has lived all these years under my protection and guardianship. During this period she has been educated by me and enjoyed the position and rights of a daughter in my house. With a view to avoid any mistake after my death about her position and rights, it is my wish that she should adopt my family name - Das.

Cuttack
24.9.1900

M.S. Das

I have hitherto been brought up and educated and being still educated by Hon'ble M.S.Das , it is my wish as much as his that I should change my family name into Das. I request my friends and the public to address me henceforth as Miss Shoilabala Das.

Cuttack
24.9.1900

S.B. Hazra

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PART II

The Personality And Achievements of Madhusudan: Close Views

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MADHUSUDAN DAS : THE BUILDER OF NEW ORISSA

National heroes have adorned this ancient land of India from time to time through successive centuries. Madhusudan Das was one such hero hailing from the South Eastern part of the land called 'Kalinga' in ancient times and 'Utkal' in the mediaeval times and 'Orissa' in modern times. Madhusudan stands out prominent amongst the patriotic nationalist leaders who aimed at gradually wresting power from the British bureaucrats and paving the way for eventual political independence and gradual economic stabilisation of India. He was the pioneer of the movement for National integration of India based on the solid foundation of homogeneous racial and linguistic units, stressing inherent unity amidst seeming and apparent diversities of the vast country. Mahatma Gandhi referring to the life and services rendered by Das for the uplift of India, described him a great Indian Patriot who wore himself out into putting into practice the various nation-building schemes. Mahayogi Aurobindo described Das even in his lifetime in 1907 as a high spirited and very capable leader who roused political consciousness in certain regions of the country and thus contributed to the growth of the solidarity and patriotic consciousness of India as a whole.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru remarked while unveiling the statue of Das at Cuttack that Madhusudan Das was not only a leader of Orissa, he was rather a great Indian Leader who did many pioneering works for the uplift of Indian social and economic condition. By confining his political activities to a particular region of India, Das placed an ideal before all other different regions of the country and it was worth emulating.

The British East India Company conquered India piece by piece and carved out administrative provinces with artificial boundaries to suit their convenience. Bengal was conquered in 1757 and thereafter Emperor Shah Alam granted Dewani of Bengal, Bihar

and Orissa to Robert Clive. This Orissa of Dewani did not include Orissa proper but only Midnapur area, as at that time Orissa was a part of Marhatta Kingdom of Bhonsla. In 1803 coastal Orissa was conquered and added to Bengal. The administration of India was entrusted to the Governor-General whose headquarters were located in Calcutta. There was a separate Governor for the South with headquarters in Madras and another for the West with headquarters in Bombay. Calcutta being the headquarters of India was simultaneously the administrative centre from which Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were controlled and these three together were called the Lower Provinces of Bengal. The Bengalees got the advantage of higher education as educational institutions were started at Calcutta and the influence of educated Bengalees in administrative services spread beyond the borders of Bengal proper to the outlying parts. At that time Orissa consisting of Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts with a population of a few lakhs was a negligible part of the Lower Provinces of Bengal. Hence the people of Orissa could not get adequate attention of the Government and could not compete with the people of Bengal proper.

It may be mentioned in this connection that the early steps taken by the East India Company to consolidate the latest acquisition namely the province of Orissa were very unpopular, as a result of which there arose the Paik rebellion in 1817 which having occurred forty years before the Sepoy Mutiny may be rightly called the First War for Political Independence in India, though the European and Bengalee historians have not attached due and legitimate importance to this event. The rebellion was quelled and gradually Orissa fell in line with other parts of India in respect of administrative details. Though the Viceroy Lord William Bentick introduced English and Western education in 1835 in the whole of India, Orissa could not be benefited, it being tagged to the tail end of Bengal. Just before Sepoy Mutiny the first English Schools started in Cuttack, Puri and Balasore. So it may be said that Orissa lagged almost three generations behind Bengal in respect of Western education.

Some social and cultural movements started in India during the period. Ram Mohan Roy founded Brahmo Samaj in Bengal. Long afterwards Dayananda Saraswati started the Arya Samaj in

Punjab and thereafter Ranade, Ramakrishna Bhandarkar and others started Prarthana Samaj in Bombay. These organisations were more interested for religious and social reformation than for political regeneration.

As for political movements of this period, the British Indian Association was started in Calcutta in 1853. Similar political associations, viz, Madras Mahajana Sabha and Bombay Sarbajanik Sabha and Presidency Association sprung up in the south and in the west.

It is actually after the Sepoy Mutiny that people became more and more politically conscious with the spread of western education. For Bengal including Bihar and Orissa, a separate post of Lieutenant Governor was created with headquarters at Calcutta.

Madhusudan Das was born in 1848. At that time no English School existed in Orissa. There were a few Persian Makhtabs in the Cuttack District. His father was a Persian knowing Pleader in the Cuttack Court who provided elementary education to his son in the village school. Before Das was born there was a movement to replace Oriya language by Hindustani. This was sponsored by Mr. Ricketts, an European I.C.S. then member of the Board of Revenue of Lower Provinces. This move was opposed by Goldsbury— another I.C.S.— the then Divisional Commissioner of Orissa. Some time after a Bengali scholar and historian Rajendra Lal Mitra started an agitation for introduction of the Bengalee language in schools and courts of Orissa in place of Oriya. Madhusudan was a school student at Cuttack when such agitation with its counter-agitation continued in Orissa. With this background Madhusudan began his student life in Cuttack having been subject to the influence of this language controversy which was the root of subsequent political agitation in Orissa. When Madhusudan was a schoolboy nobody in India could visualise the political unity and national integration of India as a whole. People in Orissa felt that the British East India Company and British Crown were nominal overlords and that the educated Bengalees ruled Orissa as real administrators. Bengalee landlords who replaced the old Oriya houses as a result of the Sunset Law were the most influential persons in the Orissa Division. Oriya people of Orissa realised that they were the second class citizens in the Lower Provinces of Bengal and

the fate of Oriya language was hanging in balance. The pitiable status of the Oriya race and language indirectly influenced the Oriya young men of the time who found that they did not get proper educational advantages and proper share in services under the East India Company or the Crown.

At that time the large number of Feudatory States of Orissa remained under their rulers controlled by British Political Agents. Ganjam and Koraput (then a part of Vizagapatnam Agency) was under Madras Government and Sambalpur area under the Chief Commissioner of Central Provinces. Singhbhum formed a part of Chotanagpur Division of the Lower Provinces. As has been already hinted at, there was practically no movement of national integration of India from a political standpoint as there was no close contact between Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. The continuance of British administration was accepted as inevitable without murmur. The few educated Indians, who were serious, could not visualise a movement for national independence. Ram Mohan Roy's social reform movement and Dayanand Saraswati's religious and political movement did not have its impact in the west and south of India. While they were preaching measures of reform in the North and East a religious reform in the person of Mahima Gossain came on the scene in Orissa with a new religion which spread over Orissa and the contiguous areas of the Feudatory States bordering Cuttack. A Persian knowing Oriya ministerialist officer in the Divisional Commissioner's Office namely Bichitrnand Das of Kantabania of Jajpur Sub-Division with a smattering of English first realised that whatever be the state of semi-political movements in other parts of India, the Oriya people could not take part in it in view of their vivisected condition. It was he who first hurled the banner of Oriya movement with a demand for recognition of Oriya language in the administrative and educational institutions and who demanded unification of all scattered outlying Oriya speaking tracts under one Provincial Administration, separate from Bengal, Madras and Central Provinces. Of course just after the great Orissa famine of 1866 Sir Strafford Northcote—the then Secretary of State for India—suggested that unless Orissa became separated from Bengal, her problems could not be sufficiently tackled by the British administration.

Unfortunately that could not be carried out at that time. Madhusudan while a student in the Cuttack School was greatly influenced by Mahima Gossain's religious preachings and Bichitrinand's movement for recognition of Oriya language and amalgamation of the Oriya speaking tracts. Madhusudan in his school days organised a student's movement for the recognition of Oriya language in Educational Institutions and had run the risk of displeasing the Educational Officers of the time who were one and all Bengalees imported from Calcutta.

The first few Oriya students to pass the then Entrance Examination from the newly started Calcutta University from 1859 to 1863 accepted some petty and subordinate Government jobs. But Madhusudan, who according to a Calcutta Gazette Notification dated 2nd January 1865 passed the Entrance Examination in second division held in the year 1864, rejected the offer of government appointment and defied his father's persuasion to accept such a post and was determined to embark on an ambitious career for higher education in Calcutta. He found that it was absolutely necessary for Oriya students to acquire University education. So he started for Calcutta for higher education with a determination to obtain the highest degree from that University. He, on his way to Calcutta, halted for a few months in Balasore, accepted a teachership there. There in contact with the great Oriya literary figure Fakir Mohan Senapati and others they planned schemes for confirmation of Oriya as the language of Orissa and for restoration of Oriya traditional national culture. Fakir Mohan in his autobiography referred to the ambitions of this young man Madhusudan to raise the cultural and political level of Orissa. Madhusudan left Orissa in 1866 and came back in 1881. During these fourteen years of absence from Orissa he chalked out his career through heavy odds and financial difficulties and obtained the highest degrees of the Calcutta University having passed M.A. in 1873 and B.L. in 1878. During this period he came in contact with the then leading Bengalee social and religious reformers like Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Keshab Chandra Sen and Devendra Nath Tagore. He also came in close touch with the then political leaders like W.C Banerjee, the first President of the Indian National Congress, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Harish Chandra Mukherjee, Kesto Das Paul and Lal Mohan Ghose.

He accepted for some time some employment and was a tutor to Ashutosh Mukherjee who subsequently became a Vakil of the Calcutta High Court and Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and it is thus said that he trained and tamed the future Royal Bengal Tiger of India. He watched the activities of the British Indian Association as a member there of and was influenced by it at its germinating stage as the first political movement of India. Madhusudan after passing B.L. examination wanted to join the Calcutta Bar, but on the advice of Sir Richard Garth—the then Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court came back to Orissa and selected it as his sphere of professional as also of political activity. Madhusudan's fourteen years stay in Calcutta was very fruitful in his subsequent political career. As Calcutta was the headquarters of India at that time, he had opportunities of meeting the prominent people of different parts of India and highest British officials of Government of India and he had exchange of views with all of them regarding the political and economic set up of India. With this background he came back to Orissa and electrified the dormant Oriya mind for rejuvenation of their land. Madhusudan joined the Cuttack Bar in 1881 and he had to pass through heavy odds in the beginning of his professional practice as the Bengalee members of the Bar did not relish the entry of an Oriya in their midst. Though he had to suffer in the early stages of his practice, he overcame these difficulties by dint of his merit and tact and shone as the brightest jewel in Cuttack Courts and ultimately became the Legal Advisor of all the leading aristocrats of Orissa and unrivaled Leader of Orissa Bar. Fortunately for him at this time he attracted the attention of the widowed Rajamata of Puri who fought for the hereditary rights of superintendence of the PURI JAGANNATH TEMPLE and Madhusudan took up her cause and became successful and thereby he gained popularity in Orissa and people of all ranks of Orissa placed implicit faith in the capabilities of Madhusudan. On account of absence in easy communication, Orissa was then a detached part of India. Madhusudan's first task was to organise Orissa's national life and with a view to this he started the Utkal Sabha (The Orissa Association) to ventilate the grievances and aspirations of the Oriya people. Before this association was born there were stray Clubs at Cuttack and Balasore organised by some Bengalees but these could not attract

the Oriya national mind.

Viceroy Lord Ripon's proposal for Local Self-Government Act gave a fresh impetus to the people of India to have a share in the administration of the country. Mr. Das first invited on the 30th June 1882 a meeting of leading persons of all communities of Orissa for considering the measures for all round improvement of Orissa and he toured through the different parts of the then Orissa Division and started Branch Associations of the Utkal Sabha. This institution was started in 1882. Three years thereafter in 1885 the Indian National Congress was started and from 1886 Mr. Das plunged heart and soul into the Congress movement and took active part in its deliberations. He, as the leading figure of the Utkal Sabha, got it affiliated to the Indian National Congress and every year led the contingent of Oriya delegates to the Congress session. Thus he is the first who infused an idea of All India National Integration in Orissa and Orissa Association acted in furtherance of all India movement.

During the first stages of the Indian National Congress there was no homogeneous basis of Indian Provinces. Bengal comprised Bihar and Orissa. Madras Presidency was composed of Tamilians, Telugus, Kannadas and Keralites. Bombay consisted of Marathi, Kannada, Gujrati and Sindhi speaking people. The United Provinces (now called Uttar Pradesh) was entirely a Hindi speaking one. The Central Provinces were composed of Hindi and Marathi speaking people. Of all the different sub-races the Oriya people suffered the worst by being placed under four provincial administrations and under Indian Princely Rulers as referred to above. In the deliberations of the National Congress the big lawyers of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay took prominent part. Indianisation of higher civil services formed important part of their resolutions. There were no regular and homogeneous branch committees of the Congress. The Bengalees, by being confined to one single Province and having spread their influence in contiguous Bihar and Orissa, were in an advantageous position. The leadership of the Congress was in the hands of a few educated lawyers of big Presidency-towns and the movement did not permeate to the masses. Bengalee leaders did not spread the message of the Congress in Orissa Division nor Tamil leaders could infuse national spirit in Ganjam and Koraput areas. Sambalpur side lay dormant. Madhusudan found it necessary to

organise the Oriya people of different provinces and with a view to this he started the movement for the amalgamation of the Oriya speaking tracts so that it might be a suitable unit fit to take part in the deliberations of the national affairs and be able to make its voice felt. Thus Madhusudan was the first in the field to recognise the country in linguistic and sub-racial basis. This is the foretaste of the States Recognition Commission of 1956 (1957). The idea first propounded by Madhusudan in the early eighties of the last century was actually put into practice after three quarters of a century at the aftermath of Independence.

In 1920 at the Nagpur session the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi borrowed the idea from the case of Orissa and formed several Provincial Congress Committees on the basis of language in order that the mass based non-co-operation movement might be more effective in putting forward the demand of the Indian people.

It may be mentioned in this connection that when Sir George Grierson was entrusted to carry on the work of linguist survey of India he had to consult Madhusudan in respect of the Oriya speaking people. Madhusudan threw himself heart and soul into the agitation for recognition of Oriya language in Ganjam area under Madras and Sambalpur area under Central Provinces when the Oriya language was threatened with extinction in those parts.

Madhusudan may be compared with Bismarck who unified the German speaking people of Prussia, Bavaria, Sax-Coburgh into the German Empire and also with Garibaldi, Cavour and Mazzini who raised the problem of Italian Irrendenta and formed a strong and united Italy uniting all the Italian speaking tracts on the Mediterranean Coast. He had not to wield a sword for the purpose, his pen worked wonders.

It will be not out of place to mention in this connection that Madhusudan was inspired by the history of Orissa and the spiritual tradition of the JAGANATH CULT. This movement for Orissan amalgamation was not a separatist one and it was in harmony with the All India movement for the Indian integration as a whole. The first national song in any of the Indian languages was composed by Madhusudan in Oriya wherein he depicted how all the sacred rivers of different parts of India flowed and mingled their waters in sea as

an allegory to show that all the different races of India had a common goal. The song runs as follows :—

*"Ganga Godavari Narmada Kaveri
Nana Ghate Puja Pai,
Bheti Vaitarani Lodi Jati Prana
Sindhure Misile Jai "*

[The rivers Ganga, Godavari, Narmada and Kaveri being worshipped at different places met Vaitarani and ultimately lost their identity in the ocean, taking soul of the nation with them]. Some of the distinctive features of Madhusudan's movement was that he first sowed the seed of national integration of India in Orissa in obtaining the participation of leading non-Oriya Indians for the Orissan movement. The Mahomedans, Bengalees, Hindustanis, Telegus and Maharastrians all joined in the Orissan movement as a fraternal one of the All India Movement.

Madhusudan spiritualised this movement by involving the blessings of the Divine Power for all round success of the movement and achievement of its objects. He is the first of national leaders who preached the idea of the motherland and worship of the country as a mother goddess and the Conference pandals were described as altars for the worship of the motherland.

In this way he pursued the movement of Orissan amalgamation and took part in the All India movement and in the Indian National Congress and though in the initial stages of the Congress the immediate demand of national independence was not in picture. Madhusudan directed the attention of the Congress to economic problems of India including stress on the farm and factory and the revival of the Cottage Industries. For this purpose he sailed for England in 1897 when sometime thereabout Dadabhai Narojee was a member of the British Parliament and there he delivered a series of lectures before the British public and issued pamphlets in the British Press, and raised the question of taxation, customs duties and tariffs so that Indian-managed Industries of India could compete with the Industrial concerns of England which exported the machine made articles to India. He composed a book called "Unrest in India" and thereby his views on industrial improvement of India attracted the attention of British Politicians and Industrialists of England. No Indian

Leader before him took such a step for economic regeneration by pleading the cause of India in British political circles.

Madhusudan was not simply a man but he was an age. His active life covered a period of more than half a century from 1880 to 1934 and he died at the ripe old age of 86. Difficulties and weight of advancing years did not affect to blunt the edge of his energetic life and damp his courage and when the shadow of death was darkening over his head his love for the country and humanity shone brighter. He always linked the past and future with the present and pictured a continuity of prosperous Indian national life as the law of nature as well as law of destiny. He was inspired by the past, put forth sacrifice for the present and visualised a prosperous future. One thing which the Indian historians have ignored or bypassed is that the nationalist movement of the old Congress regime took a different shape only just after the Bengal partition in October 1905 though for two years preceding this event, the Indian politicians both Moderates and Extremists got scent of it. Thereafter Tilak, Bipin Pal, Lajpat Rai and Aurobindo came forward as the spokesmen of the extremist section. The Bengal partition affair was the main plank of the new movement and the target of attack was the viceroy, Lord Curzon. The historical events leading to the Bengal partition have not been collected so far and placed before the country as yet. Mr. Das went to England in 1897 and had talk with the Secretary of State Lord George Hamilton regarding the amalgamation of Orissa amongst other matters relating India as a whole. Lord Hamilton gave an assurance that he would have correspondence with the succeeding viceroy of India Lord Curzon on the matter. Mr. Das sought an opportunity to present the subject matter of Orissan amalgamation before Lord Curzon. For this purpose he had been to Simla in the summer of 1900 and apprised him of the local situation by showing him the relevant historical documents and Grierson's survey of India appertaining to Orissa. Curzon promised to pay a special visit to Orissa. He came to Orissa on the 16th December 1900 and visited Puri and Bhubaneswar temples from outside the compound in company of Mr. Das and Das explained to him all about the artistic importance of Orissan Temples. Lord Curzon also conceived there an idea of starting a department for preservation of artistic monuments. By the bye Mr. Das had a talk

in detail with Lord Curzon on Orissan unification. Curzon enquired how much area and how much population would be added to Orissa Division by such amalgamation. Mr. Das replied that about fifty thousand square miles of area and fifty lakhs will be added. Lord Curzon smiled and said that Bengal was already too a big province with a population of 8 crores and the area to be added extended upto the Godavary river and it was not feasible for being administered by a single Lieutenant Governor. Mr. Das suggested that in that case enlarged Orissa might be a Chief Commissioner's provinces if that could be considered or the areas might be suitably rearranged into two parts, in the western part of which all Oriya speaking tracts were to be included so that Oriyas might not be a negligible minority in any province. This was the seed for the partition of Bengal. Though Mr. Das did not specifically suggest to separate East Bengal from West Bengal yet as matters stood and course of events ran, a secret decision were taken by which West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were formed into one province and East Bengal with Assam into another province which the Mohamadan leaders of East Bengal under the Leadership of Nawabs of Dacca, Mymensingh and Bogra were aspiring.

This partition roused the Bengali sentiment in as such as they felt that their limbs were separated and their hold over non-Bengalee Division of Bihar and Orissa were apprehended to be reduced.

The subsequent history of the Bengal Partition agitation and the starting of terrorist movement is well known. Though this partition was annulled in 1911 by King George V's proclamation for creating a separate province of Bihar and Orissa and though the question of Bihar and though the question of amalgamation of Ganjam and Koraput areas were, unfortunately through the machination of Madras Bureaucracy, kept in abeyance for quarter of a century, still it cannot be denied that the proposal of Mr. Das for amalgamating the Oriya speaking tracts with the Orissa Division of the former province of Bengal, set the idea of partitioning Bengal in motion and carrying out a new province, was at the root of Bengal nationalist movement of the extremist type enlisting co-operation and sympathy of the other parts of India. Tilak and Lajpat Rai joined the movement. Aurobindo after resigning his educational service at Baroda joined also. Bipin

Chandra Pal started the "Bande Mataram" English newspaper in Calcutta. Aurobindo was a regular contributor thereto. He criticised Lord Curzon's administration and partition of Bengal and Lord Morley's proposal of constitutional reforms. He particularly referred to Madhusudan's Orissa amalgamation movement and spoke of him as a very capable and high spirited Leader who roused national consciousness in Orissa which was necessary for paving the way of greater Indian national organisation and national integration. Thus though Madhusudan did not suggest the partition of Bengal his insistence on amalgamation of the Oriya speaking parts to be united with the then existing division of Orissa was to a great extent responsible for Lord Curzon's idea of dividing the then unwieldy province of Bengal.

Madhusudan may be said to be a product of his age and at the same time he was the creator of his age. The socio-political condition of his time was such that Madhusudan had to harp on the idea of reorganisation of India on the racial and linguistic basis so that each of the neglected parts of India could receive proper attention of the Government for its political, economic and cultural uplift, thereby contributing to the solidarity and unity of India as a whole. Before him there were people in Orissa who thought of the amalgamation of Oriya speaking tracts and made stray attempt now and then and also of rehabilitation of Oriya language under sounder basis. But there was no such forceful personality in Orissa then to rouse the national consciousness of the masses of Orissa. Before he passed Entrance Examination there were less than half a dozen Oriyas who passed Entrance Examination and they without going up for higher education in the distant Calcutta took up some ministerial or provincial Service. The period of fourteen years which Madhusudan spent in Calcutta in obtaining the successive degrees from Calcutta University and his contact with the men of light and leading in Calcutta, the then metropolies of India eminently filled him to take up the leadership of Orissa specially as he chose the independent profession of Law without searching for the favour or of caring for fear of the then Bureaucracy. As has already been suggested he came back to Orissa from Calcutta in 1881 and practically came, saw and conquered Orissa, and the Oriya country was eagerly aspiring after to the coming

of such a Saviour and Prophet. His organisational ability was unique. The dead bones of the Oriya country which lay scattered in the areas of different administrative units were so to say vilified and Madhusudan by his magic pen and speech made them attract one another so as to form a united whole, vibrant with a new life. He drew inspiration from the glorious past of the Oriya country and dreamt a picture of a future glorious Orissa. He was so to say out for fulfilling a mission with life dedicated for the service of the motherland with the greatest amount of sacrifice of health, wealth and comfort that was humanly possible on his part. He had to neglect his professional career in its beginning in order that he might devote his time to the nation-building crusade wholeheartedly. Fortunately for Orissa, he had not at that time to shoulder the responsibilities of a family life. He spent sleepless nights in organising the Oriya movements in co-operation with a very few educated people and politically backward masses. In that bullock-cart age he had to run from place to place to organise meetings at the suitable rural centres of the coastal districts of Orissa. At the same time he had to keep touch with All India political and administrative events. As has been already referred to, Lord Ripon's proposal for introduction of Local Self-Government Bill supplied a new forum for him for canalising his energies. At that time there was no railway communication between Calcutta and Cuttack though there was steamer service to Calcutta from Chandabali. At such a time Dadabhai Naroji, W.C. Banerjee and others met in Calcutta and in collaboration with A.O Hume thought of starting the Indian National Congress. Madhusudan had correspondence with W.C Banerjee on the birth of the first national organisation he having been already a member of the British Indian Association of Calcutta. Owing to some personal inconvenience he could not attend the first session of the National Congress held at Bombay though he regularly attended all the subsequent sessions till the inauguration of his pet child the Utkal Union Conference. It is not worthy to mention that at that time the leaders of other provinces who took leading part in the Congress organisation in its early stages had not to bother about their provincial boundaries. Some represented Bengalees, some Maharastris, some Tamilians and some Hindustanis. They were the people who exercised substantial influence over their provincial Government. Surendra Nath Banerjee had not to tackle a question

of Bengal amalgamation, nor Gokhale of Maharashtra amalgamation. It was unfortunate that Orissa had such a problem and it was for Mr. Das to solve this problem, unique and peculiar for the Oriya country, while at the same time he had to take active part in all India affairs in the successive sessions of the Congress. It so chanced that when Sir Herbert Risley issued his famous circular in 1903 announcing the proposal for the amalgamation of the Oriya speaking tracts and consequent partition of Bengal, the question was taken up in Madras Session of the Indian National Congress in 1903. The Tamil and Telegu leaders of Madras opposed such a move and Bengali, Maharastrian and Hindustani leaders had to placate their southern compatriots of the south as a result of which the Risley proposals were rejected by the Congress. Mr. Das sounded Surendra Nath Banerjee the proposed move of the Madras politicians but he could get no sympathetic response. It is interesting that before the Madras Session of the Congress Mr. Banerjee had proposed to hold a session of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Cuttack with the distant view of stabilizing the Bengalee administrative influence over Orissa. But Mr. Das suspected that such a move of Banerjee would nip the Oriya agitation in the bud, so he turned down Surendra Nath Banerjee's move and Surendra Nath Banerjee's motive was frustrated. Instead of the annual session of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Cuttack the first session of the Utkal Union Conference was organised and was held in 1903. Mr. Das did not attend the Congress in 1903 and for several subsequent years, having been convinced that Oriyas could get no sympathy from the rest of India.

This period for the Congress was somewhat critical. The Bengalee politicians roused the active sympathy of the political group of Western India. Though Bihar was a part of the then Bengal the Biharees did not sympathise with the Bengalees as they were also like Oriyas suffering from the intermediary rule of the Bengalees. The future historians of India will record that same law of destiny worked in the step which Mr. Das took under the aforesaid circumstances. Had Mr. Das joined the Madras and subsequent sessions of the Congress and swallowed the bitter pill supplied by non-Oriya patriots of India with special reference to reorganisatioin of political boundary of the Eastern provinces and had Mr. Das not

brought the Utkal Union Conference into existence by bringing about a solid co-operation of the Princely Rulers of the then Oriya Nation and of the leading people of the directly administered British districts of Orissa, Ganjam and Sambalpur, the Oriya nation might have been extinct and Orissa might have been erased from the map of India. The original Utkal Sabha or the Orissa Association which Mr. Das started in 1882 and of which Mr. Das was continuously the President for a long time continued to exist as formal organisation till the nation building activities of Mr. Das were absorbed by the programme of the Utkal Union Conference. It was the first of its kind in India in as much as Provincial Patriotism and All India Patriotism coalesced with one another and as at that time there was no other provincial organisation of this type existed in the rest of India. The Utkal Union Conference was not simply a political one. It was conceived for the allround improvement of Orissa and was of nature which after nearly one third of a century Gandhi adopted by starting Sarvodaya Sammilani. Utkal Sammilani dealt with Political, Economic, Social, Agricultural, Industrial and Cultural demands of the country. This conference had its ramifications and branches throughout rural areas of Oriya speaking tracts. The proceedings were carried on in the language of the Orissa masses and delegates addressed one another as brothers and sisters. Sri Motilal Ghosh, who was the Editor of the Amrit Bazar Patrika at that time, attended the first conference and gave special emphasis on this state of things. Another special feature of the conference was the invocation to mother India in a Sanskrit national song specially composed by poet Radhanath at the request of Mr. Das and the conference pandal was worshipped as an altar of the mother land. The first verse of the said sanskrit song runs as follows:

Sarvesam no janani Bharata dharani kalpalateyam

Jananivatsalatanayaganaistat-samyak sarmma vidheyam

While the Indian National Congress adopted a course of boycott of British goods Mr. Das organised a campaign for revival of Swadeshi Industries. Before this he had started the Orissa Art Wares and Utkal Tannery and had organised the artisan guilds for efficient production of cottage industrial goods in Orissa. No other Indian leaders of this time thought in this line of supplementing the boycott agitation by

bringing into restoration the dying Cottage Industries like weaving and spinning, two decades before Mahatma Gandhi had organised spinning and handloom weaving in the rural interior of Orissa.

The Utkal Union Conference thus brought about a regeneration of Indian culture and a revivification of the Orissan economic condition and this was an eye opener to the rest of India.

[Brajabandhu Das]



II

HOW WOMEN GOT THE RIGHT TO PRACTISE IN THE LAW COURTS OF INDIA

"Beside your grave I often stand
With a heart both crushed and sore
But in the gloom the sweet words come
' Not lost but gone before".

Great men always live with us, though they die physically. Their memory is ever green. Their soul hover over us every moment of life. We feel the physical loss in the beginning but after sometime we gain consolation and comfort from the reflection that they are not lost but only gone before.

My earliest recollection of Madhusudan is when I first saw him at Calcutta at my father's house in a "Karimbux hackney coach" which he was in the habit of hiring on a daily term. He presented me with a very large doll whenever he won a case. In 1891 I came to Cuttack with my parents. After my mother's death in 1893 we all came to Cuttack and from that time onward we brothers and sisters came to stay with him during school holidays.

From 1913 to 1920 I worked in the Ravenshaw Girls' School and stayed in his house. I came to know him very well and was greatly influenced by him. I owe what I am today to him and him alone. He was a true Christian and though he never preached his religion he loved it. He never bent under the greatest sorrows but was reconciled to every phase of his life as he knew he was in his Creator's hands and fully trusted Him. Even in the days of adversity he never grumbled or blamed anybody, but bowed submissively to His will.

I would hear him sing at midnight "God is ever good", and "Abide with me". I saw him rolling in wealth and I also saw him in the days of adversity. His noble life taught me always to depend on God

only. He was absolutely reconciled to God's wishes, even on his death-bed he showed courage and resignation, and advised me to depend on God always. His last sweet advice constantly rings in my ears and strengthens me in my daily work.

In 1913 I passed the I.A. Examination of Calcutta University. He advised me to join Pleadership class in Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, and by the 28th July, 1915, I had completed two years' lectures. I graduated in 1916 and again began to study for the B.L. As I was a private student, the Calcutta University was first unwilling to allow me to appear for the Preliminary Law Examination. After great difficulty and partly with the help of late Sir Ashutosh and partly because I had stated in my application that I had studied under eminent lawyer Mr. M.S. Das of Cuttack, I got the permission to appear in the B.L. Examination in June 1918. Mr. Das was seriously ill just when I had to leave Cuttack to appear for the Examination in Calcutta. But even when very ill, his spirit was undaunted and his sense of duty was undimmed. He advised me to appear in the Examination forgetting everything about him for the moment. It was his resolute will that made me go through it as I was too much distressed to leave him in that serious condition.

The great "Non-Co-operation" movement was at its zenith when I had to appear for my final Law Examination in 1921. It was with great difficulty that I got over the non-cooperator's attempt to stop me. I was determined to please him by appearing the Examination. In spite of heavy odds I passed the final Examination in Law. On 20th July 1921 he made me apply to the Patna High Court through the Dist. Judge, Patna for enrolment as a pleader. Miss Regina Guha, M.A., B.L. had applied before 1921 for enrolment in the Calcutta High Court but her application had been rejected on the stupid ground of her sex. In 1921 Madhusudan was the Minister for the Local Self-Government of Bihar and Orissa. He asked the Government to permit him to conduct my case but he was not allowed. Mr. P.C. Manuk, an eminent Barrister of the Patna High Court took up the cause of Women and Mr. Das was with him in the Court. Mr. Manuk very kindly appeared before the Full Bench of the High Court. Many educated Indian ladies were present at the Court. On the 20th November 1921 the judgement was delivered and my petition was rejected on the ground of sex

disqualification.

This was indeed a great blow to all my ambitions and for the time being I was inclined to give up the fight. But Madhusudan was adamant, he would not have defeat so long as all avenues had not been fully explored and encouraged me to seek redress in higher tribunals. He inspired me to appeal to the Privy Council and he helped me in various ways. Special leave to appeal was sanctioned on the 21st November, 1922 but the Privy Council decided that £400(i.e.Rs.6,000/—) should be deposited as security for costs for the Respondent party i.e. the Secretary of State for India.

This was another obstacle in my way but Mr. Das wrote the following letter to Sir William Duke, a Member of the India Office to help me in the matter:—

PATNA

The 8th February, 1923.

Dear Sir William Duke,

You will be surprised to receive this note from me. You might have noticed that I have been the Minister of Local Self-Government in the Baby Province, as I call it, since the beginning of 1921.

"Before you left Calcutta you wrote me a letter in which you said that though you did not see eye to eye with me, you always believed me to be a true patriot. Knowing your feelings towards me, I have taken the liberty to write this long note to you. Orissa has a special claim on your sympathy for you know the country and the people so well.

The province wants your active sympathy in a matter which is detailed below.

The question relates to permission to Lady Lawyers to practise in Courts. If there is any country and where Lady legal practitioners are necessary, it is in India and specially in those Provinces in which Purdah system is stringent and Purdah ladies are often parties to suits involving decision of rights to properties of immense value. They can not instruct lawyers of the other sex and consequently they become victims to the dishonesty of unprincipled Gomastas...

Miss Sudhanshubala Hazra passed the Bachelor of Law Examination which entitles a man to be enrolled as a pleader. She applied to High Court of Patna to be enrolled as a Pleader. The Judges rejected her application on the ground of her sex disqualification.

They held that law should be amended and that as it stands now, the High Court has no power to allow her application.

Miss Hazra got Messrs. Watkins and Hunter solicitors and Mr. B.Dubey, Counsel to take up her case to the Privy Council. They applied for special leave to appeal to the Privy Council. Her application in the High Court here was not opposed by the Local Government. There was no opposite party or respondent here, but their Lordships of the Privy Council ordered that a notice of their Lordships order should be given to the Secretary of State. They have directed that the applicant should deposit £400/- as security for costs of the Secretary of State. I am enclosing a copy of the Privy Council order for facility of reference .

In ordinary cases of appeal to the Privy Council, where there is an opposite party contesting the appellants claim to the property in suit, the security is Rs.4000/- which is nearly 50 per cent less than £400/-. I do not know whether the Secretary of State will engage Counsel to oppose the appeal, but, even if he does, the cost will not amount to £400/-. The amount of security fixed by the Privy Council is not the same in all cases. It varies and I have found precedents where the amount was less. This was so much in the Privy Council appeal No.72 of 1921, though in that case there was a contesting respondent. This is a case in which the Secretary of State ought not to appear, much less oppose the appeal.

Miss Hazra has submitted a memorial to the Viceroy. I am sending you a copy of her memorial which will show the necessity of having female lawyers in India.

You will be rendering help in a just cause, if you can see your way to reduce the amount of deposit, if not to do away with it altogether.

Trust this will find you in good health and spirit

Yours sincerely

M. S Das

After a month I received a letter dated the 8th March, 1923 from our firm Messrs .Watkins and Hunter's, Privy Council Agents where in the 2nd para the following had been mentioned :

"The Secretary of State has very kindly consented to treat the matter as one of Public interest, and under the circumstances will not ask for cost This will entail a short petition for an amendment of

the Order, and will, I am afraid mean a little delay, but I will do what I can to expediate the matter.

Yours faithfully,
Arthur Hunter."

Thus it was a reality because of Madhusudan and I was not called upon to pay the security. In the meantime Madhusudan advised me to send a memorial to the Viceroy Lord Reding, on 15th August, 1922, for the amendment to the Legal Practitioners Act so that qualified ladies might be enrolled as pleaders and Vakils. He drafted the memorial himself. He wrote a letter to Sir Fredrick Whyte to draw the Viceroy's attention to the memorial.

Extracts from this letter are given below :

RANCHI

The 15th August, 1922.

Dear Sir Fredrick Whyte,

...You, kindly, have promised to find time for a perusal of the memorial to admit women to the legal profession. I enclose a copy of the memorial.

The people believe that memorials on matters affecting public interests are very seldom seen by the Viceroy himself. Lord Morley, (then known as "Honest John"), when he was the Secretary of State asked me whether memorials on public matters found way to the Viceroy. My reply was that this depended on social and financial position of the memorialists and not on the inherent importance of the subject matter of the memorial...In the present case the memorialist represents the grievances of a class of women who live in seclusion and their cause has been taken up by one of their sex whose social position is merely that of an ex-student of the University. But admittedly the memorialist spent years of labour in attaining the qualification by which she would be in a position to remove the grievance of her sex. This is proof of her earnest endeavours for the cause.

This is eminently a case in which the public naturally expect the personal attention of a Viceroy who is also an eminent lawyer... Half of the population of India do not enjoy the rights of citizenship of the British Empire. This is due to custom and caste. Government can not abolish caste and social custom, but it is the duty of

legislatures to steer between the Scylla of Social custom on the one side and the Charybdis of neutral policy of British Indian administration to the harbour of free British citizenship. I don't think that if Government had waited for the Zamindars, they would have ever done what has been done to ameliorate the condition of the ryots in India. I don't think that Indian legal practitioners would have ever consented to the right of the English Barristers to practise in the Indian Courts. The Hindu Widows Remarriage Act is not approved at the present day by an overwhelming majority of Hindu population. When the claim is for a legal right, Government should support it even if it is opposed by men who are interested in maintaining the status quo. In my humble sphere of Local Self-Government I have introduced representatives of the depressed classes into Municipal and District Boards. I do not expect the support of the high castes and I do not wait to consider their voice. As a Tax payer he has a right to voice the views of his class and it is my duty to give him his right.

This long letter, added to my request for a perusal of the memorial, means a great demand on your valuable time. Such a demand from a mere acquaintance is impertinent. My only excuse is your calm, cool and discriminating temperament which impressed me so much during my interview in the morning and the conversation at the dinner table.

Begging to be excused

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M.S. Das

To Hon'ble Sir Fredrick Whyte, Kt.
Ava Lodge.

The Hon'ble Sir Fredrick Whyte's reply was:

SIMLA

The 25th August, 1922

Dear Mr. Das,

Many thanks for your letter of August, 15, enclosing Miss Hazras memorial. You are quite right in thinking that I take a great interest in the subject, and I shall mention the matter to the Private Secretary. I have no doubt, however that the memorial has duly

reached His Excellency's hands and from what I know of his previous political interest, I am sure that he will read it with sympathy.

I am,

Your's sincerely,

A.F.Whyte.

In the mean time Dr. H.S. Gour (a member of the Central Legislative Assembly) was asked by Madhusudan to bring in a resolution to remove the sex disqualification, so far as practice in the Law Court was concerned. This was in the form of an amendment of Mr. Joshi's resolution for removal sex disqualification so far as suffrage was concerned. Miss Shoilabala Das and I went to Delhi to see some of the members and the President of the Legislative Assembly in connection with Dr. Gour's resolution.

Those who have read the newspapers of February 1923 and watched the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly must have wondered how Dr. Gour brought up the amendment of the Legal Practitioners's Act in the resolution at the eleventh hour without giving any previous notice to the members and how Sir Fredrick Whyte, who was a very strict President of the Assembly, allowed such an irregularity. Even when some members objected to Dr. Gour's resolution, he kept them in order and allowed Dr. Gour to move this resolution. Further, even the then Home Member, after making a mild protest against the resolution promised that the Government would consider it. The public was taken by surprise, but if they would have known the case, they would have known who was prime offender in this irregularity in the very Chamber where Laws are made. Miss Das and myself accompanied by Dr. Gour, just before the Council hour, went to see the President in his Chamber and Miss Das explained to him all about Dr. Gour's resolution and requested him to take interest in Women's cause. We also saw the Home Member. Both the President and the Home Member were sympathetic. We met several other Assembly Members in this connection. At our persistent request after the Assembly meeting, the Home Member promised to introduce a Bill to amend the 'Legal Practitioners Act' so that women would be able to practise in the Law Courts of India.

In August, 1923, I sent to almost all the members of the Legislative Assembly copies of my memorial to the Viceroy to create sympathetic interest amongst them.

In September, 1923 the reading of the Bill took place in the House and met with no opposition from the Members. The Bill was made into an Act and thus the legal profession in India was thrown open to women. I wanted to practise as a Vakil, so I had to appear at the Chamber Examination. I was allowed to enroll without appearing at the Chamber Examination only because I was Madhusudan's articled clerk. I was enrolled as a Vakil on 12th December, 1923. After Madhusudan's resignation of his Ministership, it was a great privilege for me to practise as his junior Vakil in the High Court of Patna. The news of this incident was published on the 23rd January, 1924 in the following terms:

"On Thursday Miss Sudhansubala Hazra, B.L. Vakil appeared for the first time before Mr. Justice P.R.Das in the Patna High Court with Mr. M.S.Das, as her senior in a case. She was in the usual Vakil's black gown. The Court was crowded to see the first Lady Lawyer appearing in the court in Bihar. It will be remembered that when she first tried to get enrolled as a Vakil, a full bench of the Patna High Court refused the application. Miss Hazra, who is the foster daughter of Mr. M.S.Das, appealed against the decision of the Patna High Court to the Privy Council. In the meantime, however, the India Government modified the law and permitted Lady Lawyers to appear in the Law Courts. Miss Hazra will practise in the Patna High Court at present as a Junior of Mr. M.S. Das, Vakil, who for more than a year after his resignation of the Ministership, has been practising as a Vakil of the Patna High Court."

Thus it was due to Madhusudan's exertion and indefatigable zeal that the right for women was won at last and the disqualification under which they had laboured for centuries was removed. It was almost a single handed fight, but when Madhusudan had taken up a cause which he knew to be right, he was not the person to be turned away by temporary rebuffs and setbacks.

It was only with the desire to serve others that he induced me to read for a degree in law. He felt that there were many occasions when the poor "purdahnashin" ladies, who would suffer silently and were even defrauded of all they had because they could not obtain any legal help from persons to whom they could not open their hearts. He felt that just as Lady Doctors could serve the ladies more properly

and efficiently, so the lady lawyers could help the ladies in India to a far greater extent than the ordinary male lawyers could do. In fact according to him the need of such lady lawyers was imperative in a country where social customs stood in the way of ladies of respectable family coming out boldly from the inner precincts of their home and stating their case to the lawyers. It is with this idea of helping the women of India more properly that he induced me to go in for higher studies and ultimately to pass the Law Examination and to be practitioner in law courts.

[Sudhansubala Hazra.]



III

MEMORABLE INCIDENTS

The following is a brief narration of a few incidents in the life of that "Great Man" with whom I was privileged to be in contact for over half a century and whose love and affection I was fortunate to enjoy. To say all the things I know of him will fill a volume, and to represent in writing all the traits of that noble soul as revealed in the daily affairs of his life is a task difficult for the achievement of one like me. I looked upon him with the deepest devotion and greatest esteem, and I shall cherish the memory of the days I lived with him as the most blessed on earth. His instructions will be my sole guide during the rest of my life and his blessings are my greatest treasure.

Madhusudan always took keen interest in all matters relating to women's welfare, women's education and uplift movements. Once when he was in Calcutta, I told him that an Oriya girl was in Christ Church Girl's School, when I happened to be there between 1906-1907. At once he became interested in the matter and desired eagerly to see her. He told me that he was so very anxious to see her, because she was an Oriya and everything connected with Orissa had a place in his heart of hearts. I then took the girl to see him and he was extremely pleased that an Oriya girl was thus seeking to educate herself.

The education of women was nearest to his heart and any girl receiving higher education and striving to rise in life had his fullest support and could rely upon his help and assistance. Once, the late Mrs. Young of the Baptist Mission, Cuttack, asked Madhusudan to help a girl, in whom Mrs. Young was interested, with her college education. Madhusudan most gladly bore the expenses of that girl's education in Bethune College, Calcutta. No one ever returned disappointed when he came to Madhusudan for help to enable him to prosecute his studies.

The following incidents give a glimpse into Madhusudan's inner nature:-

An Oriya gentleman was his rival in an election campaign. He treated Madhusudan very badly and took recourse to mean tactics to defeat him. Madhusudan, however, came out successful with an overwhelming majority of votes. When Madhusudan became a minister he wrote to Madhusudan expressing his desire to be his guest for a few days at Patna. Myself and my sister Shoilabala objected to having him our guest. But Madhusudan said to us, "You forget that he is an Oriya and I cannot refuse him any hospitality even though he may be my worst enemy". And when the guest arrived he was treated like a friend.

It was a great pleasure for Madhusudan, who was very fond of children, to entertain the orphans of the Protestant European School as well as the Convent at Christmas time. Once he was short of money and his clerk told him that it would be better to postpone the school "treat". Madhusudan told him that the children were eagerly looking forward to entertainment and that he did not want to disappoint them. The money must be had and he believed that God would help him. Strange to say that he soon received an envelope containing Rs. 500 from an anonymous donor with a slip to the effect that Madhusudan could spend the money in a better cause than the donor. Madhusudan saw God's hand in it and was so overjoyed that he told the clerk to spend Rs. 500 in entertaining the children and that year the orphans had a very good time, each receiving a present in addition to the entertainment.

It was a sort of religion with Madhusudan to give alms to the poor every Sunday. During the last few years of his life, when he could not earn much at the Bar and the management of the household was in my hands, I once suggested that it was too much to spend money on beggars every Sunday and advised monthly payment, but he said to me with grief, "If you grudge this charity to the beggars you need not spend any money on me, for I am also a beggar—if you wish to please me, then do not stop payment to the beggars".

Here is an incident to illustrate his faith in God. There was a poor boy in whom he took great interest and of whose education he bore all his expenses. The boy passed the Matriculation Examination, but often deceived Madhusudan in many ways and told him lies. Madhusudan, however, helped him all the same—but when he came to learn how he was robbed by this young man he was very

much grieved. One night Madhusudan dreamt that he saw that boy standing at his gate with swollen legs and in great trouble. The following morning when he went out in his usual constitutional walk I accompanied him and he told me about his dream. On our return home we found the very boy standing at the gate with swollen legs exactly as he had appeared in the dream. I was greatly impressed. Madhusudan was very sorry for the young man's suffering and saw God's hand in it.

After Madhusudan had filed the Insolvency Petition in March 1927, a Bengali lady, the wife of then Divisional Commissioner of Orissa, visited him. She had known him for a long time. She keenly felt Madhusudan's position and requested him to be her guest at Lalbagh till the whole thing blew over. He said to her, "Labonya, I appreciate your feelings towards me, but let me ask you a question. If a Magistrate convicts a man, is there any possibility for that man to evade his punishment. He was to bear his punishment. In my case God has punished me and He has sent this trial on me. Where can I run away to evade His punishment? I must bear it calmly and I am fully resigned to the will of God. I am ready to lie on the bare floor or the street pavement but can never accept comfort or ease from my good and kind friends. God's punishment must be faced with courage and fortitude. I appreciate your kindness very much and thank you." His reply made her admire him greatly and she could not but be impressed by the greatness of his soul.

Madhusudan did not like to hear himself praised, and he objected to flattery or compliments being paid to him. In 1903, he first started the Utkal Union Conference. The late Babu Motilal Ghose, the Editor of *Amrita Bazar*, was his guest at that time and he was very much impressed with Madhusudan's work, especially when he saw nearly 2,000 to 3,000 men all with pink Conference Pugrees on their heads assembled in a conference which made a great impression on him. He gave an account of the Conference in his paper and paid a very high compliment to Madhusudan. When Madhusudan read the article he was very much grieved and when he met Moti Babu in Calcutta, said to him "Moti, I did not know you were my enemy, what have I done that you tried to ruin my work ? You said that the Conference was a 'one man's show' and by doing this you are trying to injure my country and its cause. I want the credit of my success of

the Conference for the people of my country and not for myself. If you wish to be my friend, never again praise me for anything I do for my country."

A few days before his death a missionary and his wife came to see him and expressed a desire to pray for him. But Madhusudan did not believe in the efficacy of the prayers of others for him. He said to me, "If I cannot pray to my God and let Him know all about my own trouble, can any other man, as my proxy, help me with my Creator?" He did not object to their prayers at his bedside but he knew that their prayers could not do any good to him. Personal faith in a personal God was the keynote of his religion. He was a true Christian and showed in his life what Christianity meant to him.

I cannot but mention the beautiful device he got up to secure contributions to the "Our Day" fund. He printed at his own cost a large number of postcards containing a pictorial representation of the separation daughter Ganjam from the mother Utkal by the gulf of administration. Each picture-card was sold for an anna, and the money-collected was contributed to the fund. The device thus served the twofold purpose of reminding the Government and the people alike about the grievances of his own people, and raising funds for a noble cause.

In April, 1917, I made an effort to raise some contributions to the Red Cross Fund and I was able to raise the sum of Rs.621-8-0 to the "Our Day" fund by organizing some children's entertainments. I must say that my success was entirely due to the zeal which Madhusudan showed in the matter. He composed some Oriya songs and took very great pains to train the children to stage a small drama called "Utkal Mata and Her Son". The whole affair cost Madhusudan nearly half the amount I realised, but he did not allow me to make any deduction on that account, and the gross collection was thus contributed to the fund. The songs referred to above were in Oriya, and the following is an English translation of the same :

SON'S APPEAL— I searched for my mother everywhere but did not meet her. Those who I thought were my brothers denied the relationship. Everywhere I saw my mother's footprints, but nowhere was my mother to be seen. I had learnt in the Hindu sacred books that Sita, when insulted, hid herself inside the earth. I thought my mother had done the same as she had been much insulted. Because my mother resided inside the earth,

therefore, Orissa is the "Holy Land". My mother will appear if her millions of sons call her in one voice. Brethren, let the love for your nation burn bright, offer as sacrifice all your wealth and honour and dance round embracing each other as brothers. Then you will see an earthquake—the earth will open her crust, and out of the opening will come out your loving and almighty mother whose feet you should all worship.

MOTHER UTKAL'S RESPONSE—I have long heard voices calling me. I have millions of sons but they are not near me. I hear the voice of talkers, but where are my sons who are heroes in action? One of my sons abolished the Caste system in the Jaggannath Temple. History describes the glorious deeds of my sons but alas! their descendants are treated as contemptible Oriyas. I have no wealth, no honour and I am covered with dust, but still I have blood which gave birth to heroes and that blood will pour into your veins. My sons once were famous as heroes—that blood still runs in your veins — why then are you cowards? This sword once conquered the country from Ganges to Godavary. Here it is, take the same sword and further I give my blessings to you. Cross the Himalayas, go to the battle fields in Mesopotamia and there kill the Germans, so that once again the fame of my sons may be published to the world.

I was present at his bedside to the very end. A little more than a fortnight before his death, as he and I walked on the terrace, he told me that he would not survive more than 15 days. He was ill at the time and his prophecy came true. Only for the last nine days of his life he was bedridden. He never spoke a word about his intense suffering. He bore bravely all the pain without any complaint.

Prayers were offered all over Orissa for his recovery and bulletins were regularly issued regarding the state of his health. News about him was eagerly awaited and hundreds of people anxiously stood outside to learn of his condition.

In the night of the 31st January, 1934, Madhusudan, in his extremely weak condition, sang his favourite hymn "I heard the voice of Jesus say" with a strong and full voice that was quite unexpected in the state in which he then was. Those including myself who heard him sing the hymn considered this unusual occurrence nothing short of miracle. It was an undisputable evidence of supremacy of the spirit over our material body. This incident reassured our minds of the existence, glory and allpowerfulness of God.

The same night and again the next morning Madhusudan told me that he saw a handsome old man dressed in white moving round his bed. "Do you then really want to leave us behind and go?" I asked him with great concern, anxiety and distress. "It all depends on what my Father in Heaven wants me to do. His will will prevail. What I may think or want is of no matter". "What shall happen to me when you are gone?" I asked. As if giving me his last blessing Madhusudan replied in a consoling tone, "God will always be with you". A divine smile seemed to be playing upon his lips from the 31st January until the very last, revealing the calm and peace which his soul attained and the God-consciousness of his mind.

[Sudhansubala Hazra]



IV

RECOLLECTIONS

I have been brought up and educated at Mr M.S. Das's house at Cuttack, and lived with him for several years. I have so many reminiscences of him, that if I put them all here they will be a big volume... I called him "Dada". Dada means grandfather, and we all of us called him "Dada". Our friends seeing us calling him "Dada" they also called him "Dada", so he was "Dada" to all.

Since his college days, he was a physical wreck, and I remember that he never used to have any dinner at night. When we used to have our dinner, however busy he might have been with his professional work, he would leave it and come to the dining room for a chat. He would not touch any food, but he would sit with us for a couple of hours and talk to us on various subjects, such as politics, education, but always about Oriya people and about his country. He never cared to talk against anybody, not even against his worst enemy. He always had some kind word and would defend the action of his worst enemy. He did not like us also to talk ill of others in his presence. That was his characteristic. Once I remember, I told him "Dada, such a person has said all these against you, and we had a great discussion on the subject". He told me, "I never expected that anybody would speak well of me. Take the example of Christ. Even He was crucified; who am I, that every one would speak well of me?"

He was full of wit and humour. It is a pity, that his humorous and witty sayings were not collected, but those who heard, always appreciated him. His speeches also contain wit, and they were very instructive and impressive.

He was proud of his nationality, and always told people when they mistook him to be a Bengalee, that he was a real genuine Oriya. I shall give an incident here, which will speak for itself. Once I happened to be present with Mr Das in Calcutta when both of us were walking through the Bow Bazar Street in 1905. Mr Das in those

days was greatly interested in the improvement of industries and had a school of arts — the "Orissa Art Wares". We went inside the shop of a mechanic. While talking to him about certain hand machine with some new devices he wanted to make for himself, this mechanic wanted to know what Mr Das's occupation was, as he understood so much about machines, etc. and asked him in Bengali, "Sir, what are you?" Mr Das replied, "I am an Oriya." The man thought that probably Mr Das took offence at his asking him like that, and so Mr Das must have treated his question with contempt, as the word "Oriya" at that time signified "stupid" and people uttered it with contempt. The man could never take Mr Das to be an Oriya — a gentleman dressed in up-to-date European costume speaking Bengali like a cultured Bengalee, intelligent and clever. He asked Mr Das's pardon for questioning him. He thought Mr Das must have been very angry with him. Mr Das had a good laugh, hearing his explanation and patted the man on his back, and said that there was nothing for him to ask pardon, for he was really an Oriya, and proud to be an Oriya and there was no shame or contempt attached to the word "Oriya", and answered all the questions of the man with the best of spirit. The man was so struck with Mr Das that he would not but admire an Oriya. His idea was that the Oriyas were only hewers of wood and drawers of water, bearers of *palkis*, *malies*, cooks, and artisans. He never saw an Oriya, who was as intelligent and clever as a Bengalee and spoke chaste Bengali. I was greatly amused at seeing how proud "Dada" felt to call himself an "Oriya".

I have often heard Dada saying, amongst other things, that no kings in the world have an era running in their own name, but the Rajas of Puri have an era of their own running from time immemorial, and every Oriya's horoscope bears that era. Dada was particularly proud of this fact.

The one great ambition of Dada's life was to bring about union of dismembered Oriya race, scattered over the different provinces, and to amalgamate them into one. Mr Das wrote a long letter to Lord Curzon in 1900 on the subject of amalgamation of the Oriya people. He gave the letter to me to read. The letter contained most forceful arguments. Subsequently he went up to Simla to have an interview with Lord Curzon. Lord Curzon would not at first agree with Mr Das's views, and Mr Das felt it so keenly that he was almost in tears. Nothing

daunted, he made a most persistent appeal in the name of a race which had been unjustly treated, in the name of "Mother Orissa" and "daughter in exile", and showed how the "gulf of administration" separated the mother from daughter and how the Oriya race suffered so badly. At last Mr Das's eloquence and advocacy triumphed. Lord Curzon was inclined to do what he could in the matter. In those days Orissa never worried the high officials and I doubt if they know of her existence even. Lord Curzon at once sent for a map of Orissa, and of the surrounding provinces and had the place marked thereon, and then sent for his Secretary in the presence of Mr Das, and asked the Secretary to telegraph the Bengal Government to arrange for his visit to Orissa. While saying good-bye to Mr Das, he said, "The Oriyas must congratulate themselves in having such an able champion in you to fight their cause." After a few months of the said interview Lord Curzon visited Orissa, and again had a long discussion with Mr Das at Puri. This was the first time a Viceroy visited Orissa. During Lord Curzon's regime the matter could not be hurried through, as the opinion of the other Governments had to be taken. There was great opposition, but still some progress was made during his time. After Lord Curzon had left, the question was shelved for a long time, but Mr Das kept the taper burning. At last his life's long-cherished desire was fulfilled as Orissa was declared to be a separate province. He thanked God over and over again for having spared him to that day; he could now die in peace with the thought that his race could stand side by side with the other races in India.

I remember an incident which made me highly admire the Grand Old Man of Orissa in the trials of his life. In 1925, when Mr Das's residential house and other properties were put up for Court sale, I happened to be present in Cuttack. He was going to be a "Fakir" from a "King". But I did not notice any change in him. Another man in his place would have felt simply crushed, but Madhusudan Das was made of far other materials, as he was quite unconcerned at these changes. The name which his father gave him was fully justified. He was a true "Das" (servant) of "Madhusudan" (God). He did complete surrender to His wishes there was nothing to worry, nothing to be ashamed of, but sweet smile was always on his lips.

I have another reminiscence of him that struck me with his greatness and his love for his race. Digitized by srujanika@gmail.com

Two days before the Court sale of his house, the news of the sudden death of Sir Surendranath reached Cuttack, early in the morning. I went into Mr Das's bed-room and found him sitting on his bed, morose and dejected. He was Sir Surendra's contemporary, they had worked together for years in the Bengal Council of those days and now one of them was no more. I heard Mr Das saying, "The father of Indian Nationalism is no more." He himself was the father of "Oriya Nationalism", and I can well imagine how he must have felt the loss of Sir Surendranath. He called some Oriya gentlemen and asked them to convene a meeting in the Town Hall the following evening. Mr Das presided over that meeting and asked one of the conveners to wire to Sir Surendranath's son and the press the resolution passed in that meeting. Next morning while I was sitting with Mr Das a letter was brought to him and I found the resolutions passed in the meeting enclosed with a note that Mr Das might forward them. I could not keep quiet and asked Mr Das, "Could it be possible in Bengal?" His countrymen knew full well that his house was going to be sold the following day by public auction and he was going to be homeless, and almost a pauper and except his own clothes, he would have nothing which he could call his own, and still his countrymen expected that Madhusudan must pay for such public work. Mr Das kept silent for a while looking very grave. Then with a smile he said to me, "Chandra, do not compare Orissa with Bengal. The public men of Bengal now are the fourth generation of their public men, but I am the first public man in my country, and I am still living. So you should not compare Orissa with Bengal." How well he defended his countrymen even in that hour, I can never forget it. This is surely an indication of his great love for his people and for his race.

Another incident I shall narrate here which will show that Mr Das never wished to be under anyone's obligation. One afternoon his daughter had an appointment with the then Commissioner's wife, who asked her to tea. In those days there was cordial and friendly relation between the wives of civilians and the Indian ladies. The driver did not turn up at the appointed time; so Miss Das went to her father and asked him to write to one of his friends to lend him his carriage for the occasion. Mr Das said, "No, I do not wish to be under anybody's obligation. You can certainly send for a *ticca garry* and go to the party. If the hostess does not receive you properly owing to

your coming in a *ticca garry* then come away saying to her that you will send your carriage and pair the next day." Miss Das was most reluctant to go in a *ticca garry*, but she had no other alternative, as her father was determined that she must not go in a borrowed carriage. At last she went in a *ticca garry* to Lal Bag. After the tea was over her hostess asked Miss Das for a lift to the Cuttack Club. Miss Das told her that she did not bring her Landeau and her pair, but came in a wretched *ticca*. The Commissioner's wife said, "If you could use a *ticca garry*, certainly I could do also and I shall be very pleased to go with you to the Club in the *ticca garry*." Miss Das came home looking cheerful and bright and went to her father's office room. He was pleased to find that his lesson to his daughter was effective. I do not wish to increase the volume of my reminiscences; but one thing more and I shall finish.

I was with Mr Das at the last hour of his life. I knelt down at his bed and looked at him. He opened his eyes and found me in that position, and asked me, "Why are you taking so much trouble for me, Chandra?" I said, "It is not trouble to me "Dada", we are all anxious that you should live and we are praying God for it." Mr Das said, "My life would be of no profit to all". I said, "if your life is not of any worth to us, then to whom it is worth anything?" He said, "If I live, my life could only be of a little worth for my country, Orissa, and my race and not for any individual. I can never be of any use to any individual." I was surprised that even in his death-bed he was thinking only of his people and his country.

[Chandra Kumar Hazra]



V

MY IMPRESSION

My earliest recollection of Madhusudan Das goes back to a period now nearly twenty-five years ago when I was about 11 years of age. Das came to see my father, Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee, in Calcutta. He must have come to our house many a time before this but I believe this is my first remembrance of his visit. I was struck by the respect and affection shown by my father to an elderly gentleman, thinly-built but with keen penetrating eyes and beaming with energy, who was talking to my father with a natural air of authority. As the interview came to a close, I saw my father leaving his hall of study, littered with books, files and papers, and going downstairs with his visitor apparently to see him off. He came back to resume his work. As he came up, one could see how satisfied he felt at having done something which was at once a pleasure and a duty. He saw curiosity in my eyes; indeed, I was eager to know who this gentleman was. My father said, "Do you not know him? He is my old guru Mr. M.S. Das, the great man of Orissa". My first impression of Das was thus naturally very profound—I saw him as the acknowledged guru of my father who was my adored ideal in every respect.

As years rolled on I heard of the intimacy that existed between our family and that of Madhusudan. With delight and gratitude my father often described his association with Das and told us how much he owed to his former teacher. "He not only taught me English but also inspired me to regard character and independence as two of the supreme virtues in man", he used to say. Such was the force of Das's personality and so genuine was the understanding between these two great minds that the sweet relationship between the teacher and the pupil well stood the passage of years and change of environments and never did it grow dim or stale.

The last time that I saw my father alive was on 17th May,

1924, eight days before his sudden death at Patna; during this week-end he was in Calcutta. My memory of this last meeting is closely associated with Madhusudan Das. I was leaving home for the railway station on my way to Simla. Das had come to see my father and they two were engaged in deep and earnest conversation about some important matters. I entered my father's room and took the dust of his feet before my departure. Das, who was looking at us both with a kindly smile, quietly said to my father, "Asu, I think you must go to the station to see your son off. We shall continue our discussion tomorrow". This pleased me immensely. I had my father's company for an hour and a half longer, thanks to the understanding mind of Das. And I vividly recollect how earnestly he talked about various things, how confidently he unfolded some of his future plans of activity. Who could have dreamt when the mail left Howrah carrying Sir C.V. Raman and myself—we were travelling together—to Simla, leaving my father on the platform waving his hand at us, full of life and action, that I was having my last and final glimpse at him.

One thing which I recall was the mode of address adopted by my father while writing letters to Das. He never wrote as "My dear Mr.Das"—it was always "My dear Sir" to begin with and ending as "Yours affectionately". To Westerners it may mean insignificant but to Indians this form indicates a spontaneous respect shown by a devoted pupil to his former preceptor. To many my father appeared at first sight to be a person with an aggressive personality and rough exterior. But his heart, as many know, was full of milk of human kindness. In life he had to suffer attacks and oppositions from quarters expected and unexpected. But he seldom made a display of his troubles and difficulties. Of the very few persons to whom he unburdened himself without reserve, one was Madhusudan Das. In the later period of his life I had typed not a few letters written by the pupil to his former teacher which dealt with many men and events, the opinions expressed being as free as they were frank. The replies of Das came promptly. Long and closely-written letters they were, but never difficult to read as Das's handwriting was very clear and had a distinctive character of its own. They discussed dispassionately the various questions raised in my father's letters ; they also often dealt with problems with which Das himself was confronted. Hope, faith and

courage were Das's predominant note and his letters glowed with optimism.

In 1923 my father was passing through one of the most disturbing periods of his life—at home suffering from a domestic sorrow which, as events showed, dealt him a deathblow, and in public life subjected to the fury of a deep-rooted conspiracy which threatened to destroy his beloved university. Das, who knew without being told that his pupil needed his comforting company, came to Calcutta and spent hours with him. One does not know what exactly transpired at such meetings but there can be no question that both drew from each other best that either could give, thus deepening their mutual affection and understanding. Two of Das's characteristics are evident in many of his letters. One was his determination to fight adversity and not to be overcome by it; the other was his unalterable faith in Providence which he knew would never ultimately allow a just cause to suffer.

An intimate biography of Das will be studied with profit and interest not only in Orissa but in all parts of India. His career will show how it is possible for one man endowed with practical statesmanship, with indomitable will, energy and courage, to raise the level of his province and usher in a new era of hope and progress. He is rightly called the maker of a new Orissa; for this, generations of her people will cherish his name with reverence and affection. But Das was a mighty Indian nationalist first and everything else afterwards. And as such his career will be a shining example for all Indian youths to profit by. During the brief periods of his ministership in Bihar and Orissa under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, he gave abundant proof of his patriotism, his administrative capacity, his constructive powers to reshape the destinies of his province in accordance with truly national demands. All this he did with success; and he did something more. He carried out his duties fearlessly in the truest sense of the word. He stood firm like a rock, true to his principles and ideals and never compromised his position or prestige for a mess of pottage. Some of the letters which passed between him and the Governmental authorities of the day will disclose his independence of outlook and strength of conviction. They deal with several matters of constitutional importance and will be studied to-

day with profit by Indians belonging to all shades of political opinion. Whether as a social worker or a promoter of educational and industrial expansion or a champion of political rights and privileges he never adopted any method which his opponents might describe as unclean or unworthy. Das was a God-fearing man, a man who would never dream of abandoning the path of truth or righteousness. May the life and career of such a leader of men— unselfish, honest and brave— serve to lead the India of to-day to her pre-destined path of glory, progress and freedom !

[Shyamaprasad Mukherjee]



VI

MADHUSUDAN DAS AS I KNEW HIM

I

I knew Mr. Madhusudan Das, the eminent Oriya leader intimately. His death in 1934, removed a landmark and a towering personality in Orissa. Born in 1848, and dying at the advanced age of eighty-six, he was beyond all doubt the greatest Oriya of modern times, and was long justly known as the "Grand Old Man" of Orissa. Though a devout Christian, he enjoyed the confidence and commanded the respect of all sections of the Oriya community, and was the trusted adviser and confidant of the leading land-owners and the ruling chiefs of his province, by reason of his public activities as the pioneer in education and industry in Orissa. He led with zeal and enthusiasm the movement for the constitution of Orissa as a separate province, and though he did not live to see the fruition of his labours in 1936, he worked for his ideal till his last breath. He died, literally in harness, working till his last breath to realise his heart's desire. He represented Orissa in the Bengal Legislative Council for four terms, and was elected by the Legislative Council of Bihar and Orissa to the Imperial Legislative Council in 1913. He was then elected to the Bihar and Orissa Council, and appointed Minister-in-charge of the Local Self-Government Department. During his term of office as Minister the enactment of two liberal measures of local self-government was his most notable achievements. They are still in force in Bihar and Orissa.

I knew Madhusudan Das intimately for a long time, both as a public man and as a colleague in the Government of Bihar and Orissa, when he was the Minister and I the Finance Member. I found him a man of principles, assiduous in the discharge of his duties, straightforward and conscientious, but a little eccentric. It was his eccentricity which made him suddenly resign the ministership not by reason of a vote of censure by the legislature, but because the Governor did not agree to his proposal that instead of drawing his

salary as a minister, he should be allowed to maintain himself by practising at the Bar. For a long series of years his chief interest was the industrial advancement of Orissa and his Utkal Tannery at Cuttack, was a standing monument of his remarkable zeal and perseverance in this direction, though it ultimately failed before his death. As Finance Member, I tried to assist him in the rehabilitation of the tanning industry, but financial difficulties stood in the way, and nearly crushed this great pioneer worker in industrial development.

Madhusudan was the first Oriya graduate in Arts and Law of the Calcutta University, and was for many years its Fellow. He was a man of scholarly attainments, and had a fair knowledge of not only Sanskrit, but Persian as well.

His education and training was mostly in Calcutta and among Bengalis, with the result that he spoke both English and Bengali remarkably well, without accent, and was also an effective speaker, and a powerful writer. He made his mark as a skilful debater in the Bengal and the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Councils. When he ultimately came to occupy the position of a Minister, he soon made the heads of the departments (which were in his special charge) rather uncomfortable by reason of his strict supervision of their work, with the result that the latter tried to make it uncomfortable for him but were not successful. He resigned as stated above and reverted to his profession and to industry---- his first love. His dogged independence as a Minister, and sustained spirit of sacrifices as a pioneer industrialist, should ever be a beacon light to the people of Bihar and Orissa. Although a Minister under Dyarchy he never conceal his dislike for the system of Dyarchy, and on one occasion he ended a speech, in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council, by quoting a Persian verse from the Gulistan of the renowned author Saadi, which said that no one would care to come under the shadow of an owl, even though the auspicious bird "Human" were to become extinct. This reference to a Minister under Dyarchy as an owl was a standing joke for years, particularly amongst Dyarchy Ministers, but was curiously resented by some Governors.

It was Madhusudan Das who, more than any other Oriya within living memory, revitalised his countrymen by exhorting them to cherish with pride their rich heritage, to give up their inferiority complex, and to demonstrate their innate fitness. Equipped with talent

and an uncommon capacity for organisation, he aimed at transforming the Oriya character, and the assiduity and the earnestness with which he applied himself to the task, and the sacrifices he made therefore, won for him the unstinted homage of his Oriya fellow-countrymen. The First Utkal Union Conference, held in 1903, which created unprecedented enthusiasm among Oriyas and inaugurated a new era in the history of modern Orissa, was initiated by him, and his influence amongst Oriyas was so great that whether he was right or wrong the bulk of the people of his province followed his lead without demur. A man of forceful character. Madhusudan always stuck to his views and tenaciously adhered to them regardless of consequences. This spirit not unoften brought him into conflict with officialdom and on one occasion some powerful officials sought to break his influence by adopting unfair means. But truth triumphed at last, and the incident far from injuring his reputation added one more feather to his cap.

The incident took place a longtime back, when the state of things prevailing in Orissa was, in many respects, far from satisfactory. A dacoity was committed in a populous part of the town of Cuttack, then as now the capital of Orissa— and this unusual event unnerved the citizens. The police made a vigorous investigation, as the result of which the prosecution ended in the conviction of the accused. The investigating officers were rewarded, one of them receiving a gold watch and chain. Madhusudan stoutly maintained, however, that the persons convicted were altogether innocent. A remarkable feature of the case was the total non-recovery of the property looted, which was alleged to consist of gold and silver ornaments. The police explained this in one of their confidential reports, by saying that Madhusudan Das (who manufactured in his factory, at Cuttack gold and silver works of art) was a receiver of stolen goods and the ornaments looted had been melted by him. The officers who made the report were confident that no one would ever be able to contradict it.

But some time later the Bengal police discovered that the Cuttack dacoity was the work of a batch of up-country gangsters, who had been caught by them in another case. This created a tremendous stir all over the country. An enquiry followed, as the result of which the Government quietly let of the batch of the Oriya prisoners, who had been already convicted. The investigating Police

Officers were placed under suspension. The secret report against Madhusudan Das did not now remain secret, and he immediately made a strong protest to then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. A high officer was sent down to Cuttack, and there was a considerable flutter in the official devecots. The disclosure naturally created a great sensation all over India and the leading nationalist dailies throughout the country gave much prominence to it. At last, an apology was offered to Madhusudan Das, and was assured that the Government's confidence in him remained unshaken. The alleged "receiver of stolen properties" had not long after conferred upon him a C.I.E. (Companionship of the Order of the Indian Empire) while in later years he was appointed a Minister by the late Lord Sinha, on his assuming the office first Indian to do so under British rule as the Governor of Bihar and Orissa.

As a benefactor of the Harijans (the depressed classes), Madhusudan Das had no peer in Orissa. His work received appreciative acknowledgement from Mahatma Gandhi, but curiously enough the latter persuaded himself that Madhusudan was no more. In November, 1932 when it was pointed out to him, that he was not dead, but still very much alive, the Mahatma wrote as follows : "An Ashram inmate, living in Orissa, has telegraphed to me saying that Madhusudan Das, to whose good work for the tannery I referred in my statement, is not dead. I can not account for my stupidity in having imagined that he was no more. On receipt of the telegram I have sent the following telegram to him : "Long live Madhusudan Das ! Why I do not know, I had gathered the impression that you were no more. This is proof, positive of my stupidity, but let it also be a proof that God has still service to take from you for many a long year to come".

So lived and died Madhusudan Das— a saintly character, a man of piety, a pioneer in industrialism, a succesful Minister under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and a man of sterling worth, rare patriotism and genuine independence. His life long activities have borne fruit after his death. Orissa was separated from Bihar and with Oriya speaking areas amalgamated with it from the Central Provinces and Madras was placed under a Governor on the 1st of April 1936. A year later Provincial Autonomy was introduced and a popular minstry established. In 1948 the High Court and all this — and great

deal more — is the result of the life long strenuous endeavours of Madhusudan Das.

II

No one can correctly appraise the work and worth of Madhusudan Das unless he takes into account the training he imparted to Miss Das, which enabled her to distinguish herself in various spheres of public activities. Miss Shoilabala Das is adohly daughter of Madhusudan Das's friend Ambica Charan Hazra, who was his college friend. But he made her his own child, being childless, and trained and educated her; with the result that she has been a very prominent figure in Bihar and Orissa in advancing the cause of Indian women. While Miss Das was in England, in 1907, it was decided to have her presented at the court of their Majesties King Edward and Queen Alexandra, and necessary permission for the presentation was obtained. The question then arose as to the preparation for her Court dress, which was considered a matter of very great importance. The wife of the then Aide-de-Camp to the Secretary of State for India undertook to see to it that Miss Das appeared before Their Majesties in accordance with the Court Regulations regarding the presentation dress. But she was not willing to appear before Their Majesties in any other dress than her Indian SARI. A great commotion was thus produced by her stubborn attitude, as the sari was not regarded till then as a recognised Court dress, and there was no precedent of anyone having been presented, in one's national costume, at the Court of St. James. So an endless discussion went on for days between the then Lord Chamberlain's official and the India office. Miss Das was repeatedly asked to follow the prescribed Court formalities and etiquette, but she would not agree to appear except in Indian costume and she insisted that in paying her homage to Their Majesties she would adopt not only her country's costume but also the Indian mode of salutation.

Seeing her to determined in the matter of her dress and form of saluation, Their Majesties were pleased to direct that the Court Regulations be waived in her case. Miss Das is thus the first Indian lady who was presented at Royal Court in her 'sari', and who paid her homage by making "pranam" to Their Majesties. She was the only lady presented at Court who had no flowers in her hand, nor did she wear gloves, as is the custom on such occasions. Not only the

London's illustrated papers, but even the continental journals, featured Miss Das in her Indian dress, and the novel way (according to them) in which she made her obeisance. Her presentation in Indian dress created a precedent for other Indian ladies to wear 'sari' if they so desire and so, by her determination, she caused the 'sari' to be recognised as a dress at Their Majesties Court and the "pranam" as suitable form of salutation. About a quarter of a century later, the same question arose at the Vatican, in the case of the presentation to His Holiness the Pope, of a South Indian lady of the Roman Catholic persuasion, solved satisfactorily the lady being allowed to appear in Indian costume.

Miss Das has worked all her life for the uplift of Indian women, and amongst her many valuable services may be recalled her securing for them the right to practise in the Indian Courts of law which was not acknowledged till then. Miss Regina Guha was the first Indian qualified legal practitioner, who tried to be enrolled in Calcutta High Court but failed. Miss Guha's case was argued by first before a full bench of the Court, but permission was not accorded to her. A similar thing happened in case of Miss Hazra, the sister of Miss Das to whom also the Patna High Court did not grant permission to practise under the law, as it then stood. Educated Indian women were much exercised about it. Due, however, to the persistent efforts of Miss Das in particular, the Government brought in an amending Bill to the Legal Practitioners' Act, so that the women in India should also have the right to practise in Court of Law, which Bill was duly placed on the Statute book. The credit for this achievement, which removed a serious sex disability and enabled the women in India to practise in courts of law thenceforward, was largely due to the agitation carried on by Miss Das. She was for years a Fellow of the Patna University, and was also elected to the Syndicate, in which capacity she acquitted herself creditably. In 1944 she was nominated a member of the Utkal University. It fell to my lot as the Law Member of the then Provincial Government to appoint her an Honorary Magistrate, and she was the first woman in India to hold such a high office. She held that office for years, with great distinction. Altogether, her record as a pioneer in the women's movement is unique, and will find a prominent place in a history of the emancipation of Indian women.

[Sachchidananda Sinha]

VII

MY REMINISCENCES OF MR. DAS

The late Mr. M.S. Das, whom all Utkal loved to call "Grand Old Man", was in a way my *Guru* (preceptor) in public life and it is with feelings of deep reverence that I sit down to chronicle my reminiscences of him....

While yet a student of the school and the college I knew Mr. M.S. Das as the lawyer of my revered father, the late Narasingha Praharaj, but my intimate connection with Mr. Das began after I joined the Cuttack Bar in the year 1903. In the very earliest days of my practice Mr. Das did me the kindness of recommending me to some of his clients and this, at that stage of my career, certainly meant a good deal for me.

Orissa of those days was not Orissa that we find today. The Lieutenant-Governors, living far away in Calcutta, had very queer ideas about the people of Orissa. Some of them declared that the Oriyas were not fit for Provincial Executive Service. It was not only through the advocacy of Mr. M.S. Das that the first batch of Oriya graduates got into that sacred preserve of their more fortunate brethren, the Bengalees. Mr. Das went to England and there he pleaded for the advantage of Permanent Settlement being conferred on Orissa as had been the case with Bengal. He met the then Secretary of State for India and some prominent members of Parliament for the purpose who were all deeply impressed with his magnetic personality. On his return to Orissa he became busy in improving the culture of Orissan arts, e.g., filigree work, fine handloom weaving in silk and cotton etc. Every year he was being consulted by the Government of Bengal on the matter of recruitment of the Oriyas into the Provincial Executive Service. After we had taken our Law Degrees I and the late Abhiram Bhunja, M.A, B.L., approached Mr. Das for his recommendation to be admitted into the Provincial Executive Service. We both were well-known to him and he strongly

dissuaded us from being inclined that way. He held that gifted young men getting into Government service were lost, for all practical purposes, to the best interests of the country. We had to bow down to his behest.

Mr. Das's towering personality came prominently before the eye of the public when his activities for the unification of the Oriya-speaking tracts merged in the national agitation for the same.

It was in the year 1903 that the Utkal Union Conference was started by Mr. Das at Cuttack, which passed the resolution for the unification of Oriya-speaking tracts from year to year and laid the grievance of the dismembered nation before the Government. No one can accurately put down what sacrifice in money and energy Mr. Das has made for the Utkal Union Conference. It is not for me to say what the Utkal Union Conference has achieved for Orissa. How the agitation through it was carried on, how the Madras Government tried their best to stifle the Oriya aspirations and how after full 30 years' struggle the Oriyas have at last got a separate province are now matters of history.

Mr. Das helped Miss Soilabala Das in starting the Ravenshaw Hindu Girls' High School which was then an infant school. For some time I worked under Miss Das as Assistant Secretary of the institution and both of us got invaluable help and advice from him.

So my connection with him in public life, in private life and in the profession continued off and on for 10 years till 1912 when I got the post of Government Pleader of Puri which I accepted without consulting him. When, however, the news was conveyed to him he came to my house and said, "Gopal, you are now dead to Orissa; you may become rich and influential, but you will no longer be useful to the nation and to Mother Orissa".

Our friendly relations subsisted as before in spite of differences of opinion. In the year 1916, I gave up the Government Pleadership of Puri and came back to Cuttack not to resume my practice so much as to busy myself in compilation of the Quadrilingual Lexicon for which I had practically to retire from my former public activities. Mr. Das had given up Ministership. His tannery was tottering. He was going through a most critical time of his life. Yet I continued to receive his help and wise counsel whenever I needed these. But

being much too engrossed in my work to attend on him constantly as of old, I lost touch with him and was thus denied the opportunity of being at his side in his closing days.

Mr. Das had a wonderfully sharp memory the like of which I have seen in no one else. He would not only quote the volume and the page of the Law Report or other standard works of reference touching a point at issue but would from his office room direct the shelf or almirah and the position of the required reference book in the almirah in his library room where the book would be found. One day when I was sitting with him clouds were rising and a string of egrets were seen flying. I pointed this to him in rapture upon which he recited the whole *chhanda* from Upendra Bhunja. I was simply lost in astonishment. Mr. Das told me that he had learnt the *chhanda* in the village *pathsala* when he was a boy.

Mr. Das had the liberality, magnanimity and generosity of a prince. Whenever he would find me morose he would bring out one or more currency notes from his iron safe and hand it over to me saying, "You need not remonstrate. You are in want. I can read this from your face".

I had occasions to go out to mofussil Courts with him as a junior on professional engagement. We would lodge in the same bungalow. He would not take his meal before I took mine and would often look to the minutest details of my comfort.

Before I acted as his junior my father had borrowed some money from him. After I joined the Bar my father sent some money (capital and interest) through me. I placed the amount before him and asked back the pronote. He wrote out a full satisfaction receipt for the amount and stated that the handnote was missing. He handed over the receipt to me to be delivered to my father and he handed back the whole amount to me saying that as a beginner in the profession I must be in need of money. This is one out of thousands of instances of his unbounded generosity. Even when he became bankrupt, I have never found him stingy or close-fisted... He was a born orator and would carry his audience including the mass with him. I have several times seen the whole audience bursting into fits of sobbing and tears when he would be describing the wretched condition of the dismembered Mother Utkal.

He introduced the term "Utkal" for the whole Oriya-speaking area. "Utkaliya" according to him meant the permanent residents of the Oriya speaking tracts including Bengali, Telugu and Maharattras who had long been domiciled in Orissa. It was he who introduced the rose-coloured national turban for the Utkaliyas and in his days the Conference pendal was full of thousands of such turbanned people. He opened an industrial, agricultural, art and weaving exhibition along with the Conference and it was he who had encouraged and practised Swadeshi, hand-spinning and hand-weaving long before these movements had been taken up in other parts of India.

No one else in Orissa had such an influence over the Rajas and Maharajas of Orissa as Mr. Das. No other name was more honoured among the ~~classes~~ and masses of Orissa as that of Mr. Das. It was a name to conjure with.

He was a life-long victim to abdominal ulcer. He used always to carry a big hot-water bottle inside his coat by means where of he allayed his internal pains. He ~~was~~ very sparing in his meal and we wondered how he could subsist on ~~one~~ spoonful of rice and one strip of boiled brinjal and half a cup of milk diluted with water for the whole day. He had a very weak constitution and was only a collection of bones covered with a layer of skin. The irritability of his temper was due to his constant bodily suffering. He was conscious of it himself and frankly apologized to those whom occasionally he offended by losing his temper.

He was full of wit and humour and in the Bar library he often descended from his heights and regaled every one with his hilarious wit.

He was a giant among pigmies and it is to him that we owe the creation of the separate Orissa province. He lived to see the fruition of his cherished desire to see Orissa separate and on the day the announcement of the creation of the Orissa province was made he called at my house and said, "Gopal, you are one of the few who have survived to see the fruition of our labours begun thirty years back. I am happy to think that the British Government have at last admitted the claim of the Oriyas to be counted as a distinct unit in the Indian administration and to have distinct tradition, civilization,

history and culture of their own. I do not mind the exclusion of some of the Oriya-speaking tracts. Once the principal is admitted we shall be united under one administration sooner or later".

He did his last duty to Orissa as a member of the Administrative Committee presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Hubback. It was in the fitness of things that he was there to fix down the details of administration of a province which he has shed his life-blood for thirty long years to create.... To Orissa he was what Mazzini was to Italy.

[Gopal Chandra Praharaj.]



VIII

MR. DAS & MYSELF

It is very difficult to say when I first knew of Mr. Madhusudan Das. When I was a child his name had already been a household word. Mr. M.S Das had successfully captured the imagination of our people as the only man whom people could look up to in time of necessity and difficulty. That is exactly how persons, destined to be men of the people, begin the career of their greatness.

I remember to have first seen him in probably 1901, when on hearing that "Madhu Babu" had come, I with some other school friends came running to have a glimpse of him.

The famous Utkal Union Conference of 1903, of which he was the father and author, was held at Cuttack. Mr. Surendranath Banerji wanted to have the Bengal Provincial Conference in Cuttack and asked Mr. Das to get it up, yet he would not accept a resolution for the amalgamation of Oriya-speaking tracts. As a result of that difference the same year the first session of the Utkal Union Conference was held in Cuttack instead of the Bengal Provincial Conference. Just after the Conference at Cuttack in Christmas of 1903, Mr. M.S. Das engaged some preachers and with them he toured the Oriya-speaking areas to make the idea as well as the demand popular. I met him early in 1904 in a huge meeting in Jagannath Bullabha (Puri). Here for the first time I had occasion to hear him at close quarters and his appeal touched my soul. Mr. M.S. Das appealed for the use of Swadeshi and he wanted us to take a vow saying, "The hide and skin, the real wealth of Orissa, is being carried by foreigners abroad, made into shoes and slippers there, and is sent back to fall on our gentlemanly backs again not to give us comfort, but to take our money, the money which should have otherwise gone to our poor shoemakers and other workmen." It was more than a year before the Swadeshi movement which came as a protest against the Partition of Bengal.... In 1911, after my M.A. Degree when I started

the Satyabadi School, Mr. M.S. Das wrote a personal letter of appreciation to me. He expressed not only admiration but wonder. He encouraged and inspired me with his own noble example of self-sacrifice.

That was the man, always vigilant of the growing tendencies of his people and ready to encourage and foster them for the good of the people. Fostering of this evolution of human tendencies is the wisdom of great men who are destined to guide people and nations....

The next event worth mentioning is : when he wanted Pandit Gopabandhu Das, whom he had made for a time his junior in the profession at cuttack, to enter the old Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council. Of course it was a small and rather insignificant event in the highly eventful life of Mr. M.S. Das. But it is more in small and unguarded details that the real man is known. He paid no heed to the many sinister attempts to put Pandit Gopabandhu out of the way. A custodian of the nation's best interests as he felt himself to be, he called many such attempts mean and such motives unworthy. This demonstrated how he could feel and work for a cause he took up in the belief that he did it for the well-being of the race. This also show what an expert he was in selecting people for work. In this connection it is interesting that Gopabandhu practically began his public life in 1904 by opposing Mr. M.S.Das on the issue as to whether Orissa with Sambalpur and other Oriya speaking tracts should remain in Bengal or go to form a part of the Cental Provinces. It was during the second session of the Utkal Union Conference at Cuttack, late in December 1904, that the movement was at its height, and I well remember how the pamphlet, Prarthana, which Gopabandhu wrote, was distributed in delegate camps and was read and appreciated enthusiastically. Mr. M.S.Das did not of course like all these activities of Gopabandhu for he was not a man to brook opposition in ideals and even in methods of work. But he was not selfish and he saw originality and germs of greatness in Gopabandhu even then. This appreciation of Gopabandhu grew, and later on, the budding patriot found a definite place in his heart.

In 1912, Mr. Das was working for the Orissa Tenancy Act. It was then a Bill pending in the Bihar and Orissa Council. Mr. Das wanted to secure the rights for the tenants of Orissa which they had

gradually lost under Bengal. His memorable memorandum on the subject is still a monumental record of the tenant's case, and has since remained unsurpassed in the line of its investigation, the character of its conclusions, and its patriotic outlook. It established an almost irresistible claim for the peasant proprietorship in Orissa, based not on any ideal of Government, but on historical and traditional circumstances which served well in the past and were mainly responsible for the better care of the land and its better yield. How much of this claim was later on incorporated in the Act, and in what manner, is a different story. For our vested interests backed by Government, are out to frustrate all popular attempts for natural adjustments and reasonable distribution of property and possession, and want to impose on us a new order of society based on theories propounded in lands and among peoples who have little in common with us in history and institution. In order to make the peasant's claim all the more forceful Mr.M.S.Das therefore organised a Praja Pratinidhi Sabha (Representative Tenant's Association) of which he himself was the President and choose Gopabandhu and myself as Secretaries. I still remember the great enthusiasm with which thousands of tenants from the districts of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore responded to a simple invitation of their "Madhu Babu". They did not know, for what they were coming and what the huge conference was for, but they belived that "Mahdu Babu" was doing something good for the tenants. All resolutions were put and passed unanimously when Mr. M.S.Das stood up and explained them. That was the unique hold he had on his poeple whose interests he was destined to guard and guide for over a generation.

He spent a fabulous fortune which he had made during his own lifetime and spent it mainly on activities he considered national. Industry of the nation, and for the nation, was his hobby. By this single-handed endeavour he made Orissa world-famous for the filigree work as well as for leather and leather goods. The industries failed as co-operative organisations, as they were bound to do in Orissa, for which place such adventures were perhaps far too advanced. But the goldsmiths as well as the shoemakers of Cuttack, and of Orissa for that matter, still bear testimony to the skill and prosperity secured to them by the single-handed endeavours of Mr.

M.S. Das, who achieved what he did at a cost which resulted in his ultimate insolvency... The man that he was all his life still animated him at 83, though it may be in flickers and it was ablaze when by degrees he was feeling his slow and painful way to that eternal region from where there is no return.

At the end of January 1934 I read in the daily press of Cuttack that Mr. M.S.Das was dangerously ill. I ran to Cuttack at once and went straight to the bedside of Mr. M.S. Das. The old man was lying prostrate but quite alive to the surroundings though his voice was very feeble. I was told he had not eaten anything for the last three days. But as soon as he got news of my arrival he wanted me by his bedside. I was surprised to find that he was the same old Mr. Das. His eyes beamed with lustre and tears suddenly filled them. He began to speak with difficulty—"I remember things of long long ago." Thus he began in Oriya and in the course of that day and the next he spoke nothing but his mother-tongue.

I was touched and naturally the feeling automatically evoked in me a response of similar weakness. He then gradually spoke better and in more audible tones. He grew somewhat enthusiastic over the new province that was coming and on my enquiry whether Jeypore was coming, said with the inspiring hope of an adventurer, "Yes, Nilakantha, it is coming". He then suddenly lapsed into a suggestion of disappointment, saying, "But where are men?" I said, "God will see to it. You have done your duty and that is your satisfaction." He calmly said, "Yes, that is my satisfaction." I asked, "Will you give me a message for the people?" He said, "Tell them to clean their inside." Then after a pause, during which he made up for the exhaustion caused by speaking, he said appealingly, "Will you remember me?" I was touched and said, "You have practically made the country what it is to-day. The whole country will remember you. But why such a thought? We all hope you will still live to personally guide us for some time more. You are wanted still, particularly when we are going to have the province for which you have worked all your life". After a while said the old man, "You believe I am still wanted. Yes, I know you believe". He appeared to say these last words in a very thoughtful tone. I could not then think what he meant. In the meantime Miss Das asked me to request him

to eat something as he had eaten practically nothing for three days. I requested him and at once the old man agreed with an unusual amount of eagerness verging on enthusiasm. Miss Sailabala Das came with alacrity to feed him, plate in hand. With a difficulty he ate about a tola of boiled brinjal (as I now remember it) and a few tiny bits of toasted loaf, and felt a bit refreshed. Miss Das afterwards thanked me for this, for she believed that it was on account of my visit that he ate as he did that day. May be.

On the second day I arrived in Mr. Das's house after 1 p.m. But as I learnt afterwards he was so eagerly expecting me that even at 10 a.m. he began to enquire if I had come. He repeated his enquiry at intervals till after 12, when he became very anxious and seemed rather disappointed and said, "Perhaps I will see him no more". Babu Braja Sundar Das had just then arrived at his bedside. He asked, "whom?" Mr. Das with failing voice was heard with difficulty to utter "Nilakantha", which word he repeated in anxiety. Braja Babu ran in his car to fetch me. But before he reached my place I had already started. Miss Sudhansubala Hazra led me anxiously to his bedside and my presence was announced. The old dying man did actually beam into life and steadily looked at me for sometime before he mustered strength enough to speak. This time Messers Chintamani Misra and Naba Kishore Das, two young graduates, were there with the expectation of hearing what the old man would say. Mr. Das was not very audible and his voice was not clear. But he was determined to speak. Both the young men, who are at little distance than I was, tried to write out what he said. Naba Babu gave portions of it to the press, which published a version of it the next day. The conversation was rather long. I give the sense of it with some actual words which I recollect. But what I recollect more than anything else is that his accents were all calculated and conclusive. He was sure he was dying, and he had thought out an effective plan of work for the future. His thoughts were steady and his outlook was clear. He said, "You told me you believe I am still wanted". I said "Yes, Orissa has still need of thee. At this critical juncture we badly want an outstanding and experienced patriot like you". "But you don't get me. You must think I live in you. Then in feeble but measured accents he began slowly and dwelt suggestively upon a few salient aspects of the future

of the land. The real man was fully out in every accent of his. he was thinking of Orissa and Orissa alone which he loved and for which he worked all his life. Then returned Braja Sundar Das, and Mr. M.S. Das in the meantime had sent for Babu Bichitrananda Das from Court. He then began talking to Braja Sunder Babu and myself telling Braja Babu how he might do well to have confidence in me generally in the future work for progress. At this stage arrived Babu Bichitrananda Das whom he asked the self-same question. "He (pointing to me) says you all still want me for guidance. What do you say ?"

"Yes, we all want you very badly," was the reply. "God will give you a longer life. You will still live."

"Yes, I will live in him (pointing to me). He will be what I was. You will look upon him as you looked upon me. Will you do it ?"

This he said in slow but very clear and measured accents. Bichitrananda Babu looked rather unprepared and perplexed and said, "You will live to guide to us. We shall all follow you. We pray to God for it. So long as you are there, what necessity is there to think like this ?"

Mr. Das suddenly changed colour. In a tone of disappointment he again made strenuous attempts to repeat the appeal. But I felt very uneasy and intervened, "Well, it shall be done as you desire so far it lies in my power to do it. Please do not worry at this hour. If you really believe I am worth anything, I will remember it as a blessing from you and shall see that harmony is established among the progressive national elements of the province."

Mr. Das did not talk to me any more. It seemed he could not, and he had nothing more to say. But one thing he repeated every now and then during the whole of that afternoon. He would say referring to the attendants who were always careful to keep his person clean, "They are cleaning the outside of my body, but are not cleaning the inside". This he used to utter in a delirious mood and tone. I believe he was sure he was fast approaching his last moment on earth, and he was constantly thinking of his soul. The temple of God must be kept clean, that was his idea, and he anxiously wanted that it should be so kept for God to take possession of it.

The little incident that followed is significant in this connection. For after he fell into silence and a kind of expressive absent-

mindfulness, into which he was often found to lapse, I waited for a time and then came out into the verandah. Then came some students—mere kiddies—with their teacher to pray for him. This time I was surprised to hear from outside that voice of Mr. M.S. Das, to which the country was so accustomed. His only appeal to the children was that they should remember that there was an Oriya who never feared power and who was never otherwise lured out of the right path. Independently he sought the help of God. Even when he said this his voice was so loud that anxious and alert sisters, Miss Das and Miss Hazra, felt nervous and both of them tried to intervene and to tell Mr. Das that the children came to pray for him. Thereupon he folded his hands and closed his eyes in silence and the children with their teacher began to pray. This was the last I saw of Mr. M.S. Das, the history of Orissa incarnate, so to say, for over a generation. To the last he thought of his country and thought of independence and manhood as the only way to success. God he forgot not.

A great son of Orissa, the greatest of his age, thus passed away leaving a gap which it is very hard to fill. May his soul rest in peace .

[Nilakantha Das]



IX

MADHUSUDAN DAS

Madhusudan was born in the darkest days of Orissa. The disintegration of the Oriya nation had begun with the fall of Orissa kings and successive misrules that followed, accelerated their moral and material degeneration. But in spite of all this the Oriyas continued to be one nation. It is only after the British conquest that the very existence of the Oriya nation was threatened. The Oriya-speaking tract, that is, the natural Orissa, was cut into slices and mixed up with provinces where on account of numerical minority the interest of Oriyas was almost ignored. In Orissa proper, which remained after such dismemberment, the Oriyas were not in a better position. The earlier contact with the British nation followed by western education had made the sister provinces more advanced in education and in the art of administration. So when Orissa came under the British sway lots of outsiders were brought in to administer the newly acquired province and the result was the creation of an intermediary ruling class with all the evils that follow in its train. So it took a very long time before the Oriyas could raise their head. During the greater part of the last century systematic attempts were made to banish the Oriya language from Courts and this is sufficient to give indication how the welfare of Oriyas was cherished by people who wielded influence over their destinies.

After completing his school education at Cuttack, Madhusudan had to go to Calcutta to pursue higher studies. But whether at school or at college he fully realised the position of his people amongst those of other provinces. The utter disregard with which Oriyas were often treated outside the province instead of damping his spirit kindled in him the fire of patriotism and after completing his education in Calcutta and getting a good practice at the Bar, he thought of his fallen mother country and returned to Orissa to work for her salvation.

In Orissa he soon established his reputation as a prominent

lawyer and the money he earned by thousands was spent by him ungrudgingly for the good of Orissa.

The main object of Madhusudan was to get the Oriya-speaking tracts united into one province under a separate administration, or in the alternative, under the same provincial Government. He considered numerical strength and economic advancement essential for building up his nation. "A starving and dismembered people can have no politics", he often used to say. He found Oriyas flagging in spirit and entirely oblivious of their glorious past.

He strove by every means possible to infuse national spirit into them and succeeded in awakening a national consciousness. In 1903 he was the organizer and convenor of the great national gathering, the First Utkal Union Conference. He bore the entire cost which amounted to several thousands. The feeling which was just kept smouldering in the heart of the nation for years past through the efforts of several patriotic sons of Orissa, found full expression in that great national gathering. In that historic gathering the nation spoke and from that time onward the movement assumed a form which attracted the notice of the British nation. They became conscious of the wrong that has been done to an ancient people and moved themselves to remedy it. After years of agitation headed by Madhusudan Das the British Government recognised the justice of their claim and they at last created a separate province by amalgamating a major portion of Oriya-speaking tracts. Madhusudan lived to see the success of his lifelong struggle although he was snatched away by death before the province was actually formed.

Madhusudan while striving for the amalgamation of all Oriya-speaking tracts also directed his energies towards the improvement of the material condition of his people.

Single-handed and long before the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, he tried to improve agriculture by his own experimental farm. He tried various crops, but in view of the uncertain climatic conditions of Orissa he gave up his attempts in this direction and took to various kinds of manufacture. His theory was that unless a portion of agricultural population be draughted into other industries it was not possible to avoid famines and scarcities which invariably follow floods and droughts almost every fifth year.

With this object in view he revived spinning and handloom industry in Orissa. Though his attempt did not meet with great success, yet it created a taste for countrymade cotton goods and prepared the ground for workers who came latter on.

Besides this he revived the dying industry in gold and silver. The filigree works of Cuttack were by his efforts revived and introduced into foreign countries. The "Orissa Art Wares" was started and maintained by Madhusudan with his own money and he spent a lot in training the workmen, who are now earning decent wages by following their hereditary occupations. But Madhusudan had to suffer a loss of thousands of rupees.

Madhusudan found that rice worth 75 lacs of rupees is exported every year from Orissa; but as people did not know how to prepare good rice they got about 20% less. In order to teach them the process of preparing good rice he himself made experiments and taught some people and sent them out for propaganda work.

After trying his hand at many other minor industries he at last staked his all on leather industry. By his unaided efforts and with his own money he established the Utkal Tannery. The following extract from the report of Mr. B.M.Das (Government Expert) on Utkal Tannery made at request of the Government of Bihar & Orissa in December, 1921, may be read with intrest.

"Mr. M.S. Das of Cuttack, now Hon'ble Mr. M.S.Das., C.I.E., Minister of Local Self-Government, Bihar & Orissa, was the first man in the then combined Province of Bengal, Bihar & Orissa, to conceive the idea of exploiting the rich resources of hide, skins and tanstuffs of the country, by starting leather manufacture in the land on modern lines. It is remarkable that long before the present wave of Swadeshi industrialism and even before the Swadeshi movement of Bengal in 1905, this idea of pioneering a new industry was concieved by a man belonging to a province which was considered to be the most backward of the three sister provinces. All the more wonder is that Mr. Das, a highly educated man, a busy lawyer at the head of local Bar, should have been attracted to this starving trade which from time immemorial belongs to the depressed classes (the chamars) in India."

But in attempting in various directions to improve the economic condition of the people of Orissa, Mr. Madhusudan Das ruined himself

financially. He of course till the last moment of his life, had not to depend upon anybody for his daily wants, but he had to go to the Insolvency Court when with growing years he found that it was not possible for him to pay up with own earning, the debts incurred by him for purposes for the Utkal Tannery after having exhausted his own resources .

However intensely a man may feel for his country it is not possible for anybody to change the economic condition of a nation with his individual resources. Mr. Madhusudan Das attempted it and though he inspired a new spirit in various Local industries it caused his ruin without any appreciable change in the condition of his countrymen. But the money he spent in creating a national spirit produced the desired result and Mr. Das lived to see it. Money was of no consideration to him when it was required for a national cause. About the year 1905 when it was proposed by Government, to adopt Hindi, as court language of Sambalpur, they sought the opinion of Mr. Das on the question, fixing a date by which his opinion should reach the Government. But it so happened that the letter addressed to Mr. Das was misdelivered at the office of Rai Bahadur Madhusudan Rao, who was the the Inspector of Schools, Orissa Division, and was away from headquarters on tour. When on his return he sent the letter to Mr. Das there was only one day left for the reply of Mr. Das to reach the Government. As it was impossible to send the reply by ordinary post he had to spend nearly Rs.700 in sending his opinion in extenso by wire.

In his political career Mr. Das never allowed himself to be carried away by others opinions. Though second to none in his devotion to his country he always kept in view the adverse circumstances that surrounded him and moulded his line of action accordingly. He was a staunch loyalist but at the same time a fearless critic of Government. Throughout his public activities he never for a moment sacrificed his principles for any temporal advantage. He did not for a second hesitate to resign his Ministership in the Government of Bihar & Orissa, when he found it difficult to discharge the duties of that high position consistently with his own principles.

Though Oriya by birth Mr. Das had very little opportunity to study Oriya literature. All that he learnt of the language was in his

village school when he was a little boy. But his patriotic feelings found expression in verses in his mother tongue which will remain for ever in Oriya literature as unique pieces—— both in thought and language. I give below an English rendering of some of his verses written at different times but I must admit that the sentiments contained in the vernacular have been very inadequately expressed in the translation.

*"In my life I hoped to behold,
The happy smile of my mother.
But sense of duty that Oriyas lacked,
That hope alas ! did smother. "*

* * *

*"Awake ! arise ! Ye sons of Utkal,
How long will Ye slumber ?
The valour and glory of your Sires,
Say, will Ye not remember. "*

* * *

*"If you give your life to nation,
Nation's life is yours.
It's never got by aimless search,
Carried on for years. "*

* * *

*"A suttee to meet her parted Lord,
Ascends the funeral pyre.
To merge in nation why both then,
Cause you death to fear. "*

* * *

*"Nation's history is a perennial stream,
Which nation's life sustains,
Whose waters drunk becomes the blood,
That runs in nation's heroes veins. "*

* * *

The life of Madhusudan reminds me of the words of a great biographer who said 'Lives of greatmen are like torches—light to others, but waste and destruction to themselves.'

[Pareswar Mohanty]

X

A CURE FOR ALL ILLS IN ORISSA

The late Mr.M.S. Das,C.I.E., was better known by the name 'Madhu Babu' in every household of the Oriya-speaking tracts of our country. I first heard his name and his fame in my village home, far away from the town, when I was only 6 or 7 years old, from a sister of mine only 3 or 4 years older than myself.Madhu Babu's name was a word for my sister to conjure with and to divert me from my childish pranks and obstinacies. I listened to the talk and imagined to myself so many things about the great man.

After I came to Cuttack and joined the college, I felt curious to see Madhu Babu and hear his speeches whenever I could avail myself of the opportunity.

After I joined the Bar,we had occasions to work together both in public functions and occasionally,professionally.Madhu Babu was sometimes accused of being in the habit of abusing many of his junior assistants who worked with him. To some extent it was true, but his abuses were not vituperations; they were meant for the good of the abused directly and for the welfare of the country,remotely. He used to abuse mostly such persons from whom he expected something for the cause of the country. How keenly we now feel the absence of such abuses. Madhu Babu and I had difference on several occasions,but I had always regard for him and I was one of his admirers. He used to like me and my humble work so much so that when he heard during his last illness that I had gone to Mayurbhanj and taken charges of the office of Director of Primary Education and Cottage-Industries,he felt astonished and came hot haste to my humble cottage and enquired about me in these terms. "Has Bhikhary left all his pursuits and taken up service ?" He felt consoled when he was told that I had not accepted service in Mayurbhanja but had gone there for two years only with liberty to come to Cuttack as

many times as required and that my work in the State was to organise Cottage-Industries, Primary Education, Agriculture and Co-operative activities.

He was the real maker of Orissa and originator of a national feeling among the Oriyas. What institution is there in Orissa, which does not owe to him something or other, for its origin, existence or development? The condition of the temple of Lord Jagannath, the pride of Orissa, would not have been what it is now, if Mr. Das had not put his hands to it during the early part of his career.

Orissa and the Oriya nation was his religion. His devotion to the cause of Orissa was really wonderful. Amelioration of the condition of the poverty-stricken people of Orissa was the uppermost feeling in his heart all along his life. With that object he took to the revival and resuscitation of the dying industries of Orissa. He devoted his mind, money and time to industry. It was he who saved, improved and developed the horn and filigree industries of Orissa, which now bid fare to make immense progress and bring money to the workers. Lastly he tried his hand at leather. He created an innovation in leather industry and attracted the notice of the farthest countries of the world within a short period. It is to the utter misfortune of Orissa that the industry could not stand long for want of finance. His earnings were in terms of princely fortunes but he died a pauper after sacrificing all that he had on the altar of Mother Orissa and for the welfare of the Oriya nation.

[Bhikari Charan Patnaik]

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XI

MR. M.S. DAS : THE LAWYER AND THE LEADER

I heard of Mr. M.S.Das when I was a student reading in a village school in a remote corner of the Balasore district. My villagers knew of no other great man of the time. At that time in or about 1900 there was a struggle for revival of the Indian industries. The Punga salt and the rough mill cloth which were being advertised in villages were all associated with the name of Mr. Madhusudan Das and it was the common belief that the salt, the cloth and other Swadeshi goods were all manufactured in the workshop or in the factory of Mr. Madhusudan Das. As a lawyer his name was known to every cowherd, not to speak of the illiterate and rustic landholders. It is quite natural for me to cherish a desire to have a more intimate knowledge of the man who was held in such high esteem by my co-villagers and neighbours. After finishing my education in the village school when I came to town for prosecuting higher studies I got an opportunity to know more and more of the man. I had the good fortune of knowing him personally and intimately for the last 25 years of his life. I had the singularly good fortune of working as his junior in several cases.

As a lawyer he was industrious, intelligent, well-informed in law and scrupulously honest in his dealings with his clients. In spite of his constant ill-health he studied his brief with the greatest devotion. He would not find peace until and unless he mastered the minutest details of the facts involved in a case and all questions of law which arose in it. He was so much absorbed when working of a case that he completely forgot the outside world. Work was worship to him. One anecdote which I heard from his own lips will illustrate my point. Once he was very much troubled over a question of limitation. He was appearing for a plaintiff who had an excellent case on merits but the bar of limitation raised by the defendant seemed to be insurmountable. All the experience, erudition and the intensive

knowledge of the case law which Mr Das possessed seemed to defy solution. He carried his research in his library till 1 o'clock in the morning when he felt the necessity of retiring to his bed. In great despair he prayed to God on his knees to give him light. He retired to his bed, fell asleep, but towards the early hour of the morning he dreamt a dream that he would find the solution noted in his brief. He got up, went straight to his library, opened his note-book and found a note giving reference to a reported case with the volume and page of the report. He at once took out the volume of the law report, opened the page and found a decision which was a complete answer to the bar of limitation raised by his opponent. He believed that this was an act of the unseen hand of God. We may not share in his faith but this clearly demonstrates his deep and religious devotion to his work. He made no distinction between a fatly paid brief and a gratis work. He paid equal attention to both classes of work and I know of many instances when he refused very handsome fees in preference to a case where he was working gratis. He was scrupulously honest to his clients. The preparation of a case might have cost him hundreds of his precious hours, but if on account of unavoidable circumstances he could not appear in the case, he would return the entire fees paid to him in advance. This is a virtue which is rarely practised by the leaders of the Bar. As a draftsman he was unrivalled. I have had the good luck of working with many of the leaders of the Calcutta and Patna Bars. I have seen members of the profession who occupied the highest places. I can say without any fear of contradiction that in the matter of draftsmanship he was unrivalled when compared with the brilliant lawyers of his time, though I know comparison is always odious. His manner of presenting a case was inimitable and unique. He could put life and blood into dry facts. He was a fearless advocate. His sense of duty towards his client was wonderful. I have seen him arguing cases on several occasions even when he was running a temperature of 103. He practised the teaching of Christ and demonstrated the subordination of the physical element in man to his spiritual nature. He zealously guarded the independence, dignity and moral tone of the noble and honourable profession to which he belonged.

I have also seen Mr Das as a politician. He represented Orissa in Provincial Councils and in the Central Legislature. From his early

age he conceived the notion of having a separate administrative unit for Orissa. He realised that the political dismemberment of Orissa and the placing of the Oriya-speaking tracts under 3 or 4 provincial Government was an impediment on the way of the material and moral progress of the Oriya nation. Orissa had a glorious past and it achieved great eminence in art, architecture, industry and literature and that it maintained and elevated the cultural life of the Aryans. He believed that the restoration of the ancient glories was not possible without the formation of a separate province and a complete unit for the Oriya-speaking people. In his opinion the political liberation and the independence of the Indians as a whole has no meaning for the Oriyas without the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts under one administrative head. He had joined the Indian National Congress. His talents and wonderful power of debate raised him to a place of eminence in no time in the Congress. But he realised the stupendous nature of his work to place Orissa as a single unit. He left the Indian National Congress and founded a separate organisation for the Oriyas known as the Utkal Union Conference for the realisation of their ambitions and for the solution of their peculiar problems. He fought single-handed for 50 years to stimulate the national and political consciousness of the Oriyas and to secure a recognition of their political rights and privileges. In his struggle to gain his objective he sacrificed his princely income as a lawyer, his health and time. He could turn to no Oriya of his time for help and advice in his hours of failure and disappointment but his mind and the undoubted spirit of a hero and a patriot animated him and enabled him to keep up the struggle. In the closing years of his life he realised to some extent his dream of a separate province for Orissa. Before the working of the reforms the Oriyas have been overtaken by a question which threatens their culture and civilisation. It is the question of the location of the capital of the new Orissa province. Some interested persons have formented an agitation that Cuttack is not a suitable place to be the capital of Orissa. This question was raised at a time when it seemed that the location of the capital at Cuttack was an accomplished fact and beyond all disputes and above all discussions. Cuttack has been the capital of Orissa from the *Pouranik* and the prehistorical time. During the British rule Cuttack has served as the capital town of the Orissa Division. Some people say that only

sentiment is in favour of Cuttack, but sentiment and history play a great role in human affairs. It was sentiment and history that weighed within the Government in selecting Patna, the old Pataliputra as the capital of Bihar and Orissa in preference to Ranchi which is undoubtedly a much better place from sanitary and other points of view. It was the historical considerations which moved the British Government to sanction the transfer of the seat of the Central Government in India from Calcutta to Delhi. Cuttack is associated with the hallowed memory of Mr M.S. Das. I hope his spirit will urge the Oriyas to sink their differences and fight out the cause of Cuttack to its finish.

Mr Madhusudan Das as a practical politician realised that without material prosperity, politics had no significance. History told him that Oriyas built the great temples at Konark, Bhubaneswar and Puri at an incalculable cost with wealth brought from outside by the development of their industrial resources. The coastal districts of Orissa, on account of their geographical situations, must be subject to flood, inundation and drought which invariably bring famine in their company. The inland province of Orissa is hilly and mountainous. Therefore, agriculture cannot and could not feed the millions of Oriya mouths. Industry and specially the cottage industry had to be revived. Mr M.S.Das spent his fortune to revive and develop the Orissan art and industry. He founded the Utkal Tannery and the Orissa Art Wares. He succeeded in building reputation and created a market for the Utkal Tannery and this put him to a cost which was too heavy for him. It was too heavy for any single individual. It is a great pity that his countrymen did not come to his help and did not prevent a great catastrophe which befell the industrial revival in Orissa.

Mr Das as a man was greater than Mr Das as a great lawyer and eminent politician. The cause of the poor and the oppressed was dear to his heart. The cause of the poor peasantry in Orissa received his full attention and he secured many of the rights for the tenants in the passing of the Orissa Tennary Act. He was faithful, true and kind to his friends. He had a burning and a living faith in God. His charity knew no bounds. Gold and position in society had no charm for him. He treated a handful of gold as a handful of dust. Before his principle no sacrifice was too great. He resigned the ministership of the Bihar and Orissa Government for the sake of a

principle at a time when his financial strain on account of the Utkal Tannery was at its height. He threw away a minister's post carrying a salary of Rs. 4,000/- a month and all the honour and position attached to it in a moment. His character and his ability inspired awe and respect in minds of the people who belonged to the heaven-born service known as the I.C.S., the members of which considered themselves to be "Sabjanta"(omniscient).

To sum up the innumerable qualities of the head and heart of the late Mr M.S. Das I will quote the observation of late Fakirmohan Senapaty, the well-known national poet of Orissa, who was struck with wonder and sang as to how Mr M.S.Das who weighed 2.5 *paseries* could store so many virtues in a tiny and fragile human body. I can not conclude without striking a personal note. I will remember for ever the lesson which he gave to me when I decided to join the Patna High Court Bar. He asked me never to beg in the name of my nation, because a beggar either gets a pice or a kick, and no nation or individual has ever become great by begging.

[Gajendra Prasad Das]



XII

MR M.S.DAS AND THE ALL-INDIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

My recollection of the late Mr M.S.Das goes as far back as 1880. I was then only 8 years old. I looked at him from a distance. He was tall and thin man and had marked features indicative of firmness and determination. I had not the courage to go near him. My curiosity was roused by a big mongoose which he kept in a large cage, and he had also a big dog and he fed him with the choicest meat.

I had seen him several times whenever he came to Calcutta, but I never had an opportunity to know him well until I met him at All-India Christian Conference. Here I came to know the man. He was a brilliant talker and a fluent speaker. He was possessed of a wealth of humour of a refined character and his sentiments were very high.

I saw him at Allahabad in 1915, when he presided over the Second Session of the All India Christian Conference. When owing to some pressing engagement at Lahore Raja Sir Harnam Singh had to leave the Conference after delivering his presidential speech, Mr Das was appointed President in his place, and presided over the deliberations of the Conference with great ability. At the end he delivered a striking extempore speech. That speech gives a photograph of the man. I give here only an extract:

"Christian ! the word denotes one who finds his ideal of life in Christ. I am talking purely like a layman which I am. What is the most prominent fact in Christ's life ? The thing that impressed me most forcibly when I was a Hindu and induced me to embrace Christianity was the prayer, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.' It struck me that human nature could not rise higher than that. I could not have a better ideal We all know when these words were uttered. What do these words mean ? These words are to me (as they ought to be to everybody else who tried to understand them) the trumpet proclaiming to world the complete subordination of physical element in man to his spiritual nature, if I may use such

an expression."

He concluded that speech by saying, "When I had life breathed into me, I had no connection with the external world and when death comes, and I close my eyes, I shall be living but without having any connection with the external world When my relation with the world ceases I shall commune with my conscience and with my God; I do not care what the world thinks of me."

His speech produced a great impression and he was elected the President at the All-India Christian Conference in Madras for 1916.

The presidential speech he delivered gave an index to this man's heart. A few lines quoted from this speech may not be out of place. "We are Indians, Indian blood runs in our veins; Indian history, Indian traditions, are the springs from which we draw our inspirations; our hopes for the future greatness of India are built on the glorious achievements of ancient India. Ostracism is only a form of national emasculation. We shall continue to work as we have done in the past, we shall grow in numerical strength by admitting the depressed classes, and thus form a body-politic national in its character. We shall do our best to give the fair sex her exalted position as the mother of the nation..... Thus the Indian Christian community, which at present counts among its members 4 millions, will prove the nucleus around which will gather one-fifth of the world's population and form one nation. We shall contribute our quota for emancipation of the nation— a nation which had glorious past and is destined to have a glorious future.

Let me assure our non-Christian brethren, our humble services will always be at their command in any movement which seeks the political progress of India within the British Empire. The guiding principle of our communal life has hitherto been and will always be 'peace on earth and goodwill towards mankind'. We shall carry forward our age-old traditions reintegrating them to the changing times of the present, and build up an all India outlook for revitalisation of our Indian Culture."

He made such a profound impression on the countrymen that he was again appointed President of the Conference for the third time for 1917. The conference was held in Nagpur. He delivered again a most striking speech as it will be seen from the following lines —

"Every man has more than one life in him. He has the individual life and he has another life— call it communal or national Man was created to live for others and not to lead a selfish life. It is impossible for a man to lead a sterile selfish life. The miser's life is really one of self-denial, though it is interpreted as selfish. The miser deprives himself of the comforts of his life. In doing so, he is practising self-denial, so that the savings of his life may go to another, be it the wife, the son or the daughter. Human life owes its origin to sacrifice. My mother's self-denial, my mother's sacrifice is the origin of my life. When I was in the dark chambers of my mother's womb—that mysterious divine laboratory, I drank and drew my mother's blood. This body of mine is a free-will gift of my mother, originally it was a part of her body. When she ushered me into the world, she impressed on my nature the importance of self-denial. A mother's self-denial, my mother's sacrifice brought me into this world, and when I am called away from this world, my Saviour's sacrifice will carry me to heaven. Self-denial and self-sacrifice are the normal conditions of human life. "

That Mr Das was a living embodiment of what he said in these words was evident when I visited Cuttack to attend the Sixth All India Christian Conference in 1918. All the members, who attended the Conference that year, visited his great Utkal Tannery to which he invested his life's earnings. He did not lay by a single pice for himself. He gave his all and that for his country-men. It was not a single man's job. It needed practical help and co-operation of others. He persisted and struggled on single-handed with magnificent determination, but he could not save it alone. It collapsed. It was a great blow, but he took it with Christian resignation. He lost his all, but he never lost his faith in God. Any other man might have prostrated under the blow, but he was a man of strong backbone. As long as strength permitted he practised at the Bar, even when he was nearly 84 years old. His strength gradually failed. To the very last moment he had undying faith in his Saviour, and when the end came he gave up his spirit. It was a calm, peaceful end. In his case it may be truly said: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

[S.C.Mukherjee]



XIII

AN ASPECT OF MR. DAS'S CHRISTIANITY

I first came in personal contact with the late Mr. M.S. Das, C.I.E., in the year 1916. The occasion was a dinner party held at his residence to meet candidates from Orissa who had come out successful in the M.A. Examination of that year. Nobody was more concerned for the spread of education in Orissa, or more elated with joy to take note of any academic success, achieved by people of Orissathan Mr Das. The fact mentioned above is perhaps the least instance of the fatherly care he bestowed upon us all, and of the pride a father feels when he sees any of his children achieving success, however little it may be.

Since then I had the rare privilege of meeting him every now and then. It really was a great privilege to meet him and to listen to him, for he was a veritable mine of information, and nobody listened to his conversation without being made much wiser than before. Many, besides my humble self, will bear out the truth of this remark from their personal experience. The uniform brilliance of his conversations makes it impossible for me to give any specimen.

Being a Christian I was very curious to find his views on our religion and its many sects. I, of course, had heard from his mouth all about his conversion to Christianity. In private conversations, as well as from public platforms, he revealed a great faith in Christianity and his attachment and devotion to the unique personality of Christ. He often told how the words of Christ hanging on the Cross---- "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"----- moved him most to accept Him as the Master of his life. One evening, as was his habit, he was out walking round the killa, and I met him on the way. In course of conversation he enquired if I knew to which church he belonged. My answer was in the negative. He told me that during his early days in Calcutta he used to be a member of a particular church. It so happened that a particular member of that church once got

drunk and his case was taken up by church dignitaries for disciplinary measure, as a result of which he was excommunicated. Mr. Das was present in that council of the church where that decision was arrived at. He vehemently protested against the measure, saying that not only had he seen some of the heads of ecclesiastical department indulging in more alcoholic drink than was good for them, but that he was of the opinion that the existence of a church could only be justified by administering spiritual consolation to souls which needed it more than others, and not to dispense justice like a law court. Since then he severed his connection with all the visible Christian churches. He told me that he was a Christian and not a "churchian." He was a man of sincere conviction and had boldness enough to give expression to his views and as this comes from a man of light and learning who can by no means be accused of any levity in thought or action, this view with regard to the government of the church ought to engage our serious attention.

[Jonathan Mohanty]



XIV

I REMEMBER

The first occasion I met the late Mr. Das was when I passed the Matric Examination and there was a talk of my going over to England for higher education. Mr. Das wanted to see me and told my father in the Bar library to send me to him that afternoon. At five in the afternoon, I reached Mr. Das's place and was called inside his library where he was sitting. I found a small and thin figure sitting in the midst of huge shelves of books and could scarcely believe that this small figure was that of the great Mr. Das. Mr. Das told me to take my seat and asked me why I intended to go to England. I replied that I desired to go for facilities in higher education. He then pointed to the books around him and asked me whether higher education was not possible in India and whether constant study of books here might not make a man great and learned. "When there are so many books here which you have not studied, why go outside for purposes of study alone?" Was his last question --- a question to which I could not find a reply. The matter rested there and I came away and later on the proposal to go abroad was abandoned.

Years passed. I was preparing for the B.A.. My Uncle Rai Bahadur Gouri Sankar Ray died. His dead body was brought over in the evening from the Printing Company to our place. The bier was got ready. Weeping relatives were preparing to carry the body to the cremation ground, when to our surprise Mr. Das arrived ----- barefoot, bareheaded and with a *dhoti* and shirt on. He was suffering from fever. The doctor had asked him not to venture out into the treacherous March wind in the night. We implored him not to think of going to the cremation ground. He replied, "Don't prevent me from accompanying the dead body. This is the last respect I can show to him. God never punishes a man for doing good. I shall never fall ill if I go, but shall suffer bitterly if I am stopped." Notwithstanding his doctor's advice and the prayers of all the members

of his and our family he accompanied the bier, stayed till the end and returned at about midnight.

The next occasion I saw him was at a meeting at Cuttack. The Collector of Cuttack has invited us to a meeting in the Cinema Hall and Mr. Das boldly pointed out to the Collector a glaring mistake in the invitation letter itself, commenting on the fact that Englishmen can no longer teach English to the Indians. Sometime later, Mr. Whitlock and some friends had been invited to a dinner at Mr. Das's place. During the dinner Mr. Whitlock said that Englishmen knew India very thoroughly and that was the secret of their success as rulers. Immediately Mr. Das took up the theme and showed Mr. Whitlock a picture of a cocoanut tree with a human figure in the middle, and asked him to explain the picture. Now, Mr. Whitlock had never seen an Indian Chamar go up a cocoanut tree with a piece of rope as his only stay and so could give no explanation of the picture at all, and Mr. Das laughed at his knowledge of Orissa where he had spent more than 15 years.

What struck me most of all on the many occasions when I came in touch with him was the courage of his convictions and the boldness with which he could face any mortal being on earth. There was not the little trace of the inferiority complex about him, but rather a touch of the real aristocrat, an instinctive leadership of men and a consciousness of the dignity of his own position. I have heard many stories about him, stories of how he flung a bold retort against a Chief Justice, how he humiliated some interfering official, how he chastised one or other ruling chief, how he hammered a costly silver casket because there was a trifling fault in the making and ripped open a pair of shoes because one stitch was out of place, how generously he behaved towards his political opponents and how lavish he was in all his charities. These stories were so characteristic of the man that we believed every word of them, however improbable they might otherwise appear. For years together whenever anything extraordinary happened in Orissa, we were sure that it was Mr. Das who performed the miracle. Many stories were heard of his whimsical nature, many incidents of his life became the subjectmatter of lively comment; but the personality of Mr. Das was capable of all things-- the boldest of enterprises or the most insignificant of whimsicalities.

When my father was seriously ill Mr. Das called everyday. He would never go up to the patient for fear of disturbing the nurses. He would sit below, enquire about my father's condition, advise us as to what we should do, sit silent for some time and then depart. And after my father died, he was one of the first to visit us and offer us consolation for our great loss.

He was a real man -- one who enjoyed his life in the bitterest of moments, his was a towering personality in many spheres of activity, he was one of those rare men who occasionally visit us in this mortal world, one whose memory the world does not willingly let die.

[Girija Sankar Ray]



PART III

Some Lectures And Letters of Madhusudan

I

OURSELVES

[Mr. Das founded the "Utkal Sabha", the first political organisation of Orissa, at Cuttack on the 16th August, 1882. The scope of this Sabha was enlarged and in 1903 he organised the "Utkal Sammilani" in which the representatives of Oriya people of all the outlying areas took part. Simultaneously he started "Utkal Young Men's Association" as a "Yuvak Sangh" to assist the Sammilani in carrying out the resolutions in so far as its cultural aspect was concerned. He organised lectures for school and college students and in course of time this association was attached to the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and was renamed "Central Young Utkal Association."

In the last week of July 1904 at a meeting of the "Utkal Young Men's Association", presided over by Rai Bahadur Sudam Charan Naik, Asst. Superintendent of Orissa feudatory states, Mr. M.S. Das delivered a lecture at the College Hall. The subject of his lecture was "Ourselves" exhorting Oriya young men to look back to the spiritual background of the country and to aspire after spiritual development. Mr. Das's speech had been published in the Oriya Weekly "Utkal Dipika" of Cuttack in its issue dated 30th July 1904.

At that time short hand system had not been introduced. Mr. Das delivered the lecture ex-tempore. Abhiram Bhanja, M.A., B.L., then an organiser of the association and also junior to Mr. Das, took notes in long hand and submitted it to Utkal Dipika for publication. This speech will show that Mr. Das was not merely a statesman or a politician. He was so to say a Religious Prophet. His stress on spiritual advancement and his references to soul, divinity and faith in God indicate that he was a spiritual man and politics was something secondary to him. ---Brajabandhu Das]

At the outset I should tell you that I am not a scholar nor a Pandit nor a man who has devoted the best portion of his life in the field of learning and literature. I don't pretend to be a master of English

language. So you cannot expect to hear from me a learned discourse. If you don't find a nominative and a verb closed to one another like a bride and a bridegroom before the Marriage Registrar, I hope you will not pronounce a hasty judgement of divorce between my feelings and my language. I speak only what I feel and what my heart prompts. Now my dear young friends:

The subject of my remarks is "Ourselves", "Ourselves" includes, the ideas of "myself" and "yourself", this forms arithmetically "Ourselves. "

As regards myself I should tell you that nothing affords me so much pleasure or pain before you as an ideal life. Unfortunately mine cannot be said to be an ideal life. I have had many pitfalls, many shoals, many sand-banks, many dangers to go through. So I cannot be expected to lead you safely through the voyage of life.

This much I tell you that I can't be your pilot. I can stand on the most of the ship and can warn you not to take the course which led me to pitfalls and sand banks, but I cannot direct the course of the ship. Now comes the other element "yourselves". Who are you? What are you? And what is your position in the society? If you have ever been on board of a steamer, you may have noticed that the safety of the vessel depends on one man—that is the commander. Similarly the fate of your country depends on you.

Try to imagine the responsibility that hangs to your position. Whether India can ever be in future what she had been before, entirely depends upon you.

In India we find the superstitions of the oriental character on the one hand and the materialism of the western world on the other. Those are the two dangers—Scylla and Charybdis—of which you are so much afraid.

I don't know whether any of you has stood by the death-bed of a good and noble man who lived for glorification of God. If you have ever stood by such a death-bed when life was fast ebbing away, when cold hand of Death was creeping over the body, you must have felt a kind of electric shock, a thrill, a new experience.

Often I have stood by such a death-bed and what I said is based on personal experience. If you have never seen such a thing, let me take you to such a region ten fold before your imagination, the

panorama of Prahlad's persecution by his father Hiranya Kasyapa or Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Or if you wish to see such a picture go back to the days that will never return, the golden days of our forefathers, when chaste women died the death of 'Suttee'.

My grandmother died such a glorious death and when in moments of weakness an evil thought has accursed to me and selfishness has taken possession of me, I have often heard the voice of my grandmother whispering in my ear, 'will you taint my blood?' Often our young men think that physical development is the only thing to be desired in the world. If any of you is under such a wrong impression I should like to take him to Japan. If you look at the Japanese and Russian you would certainly think that the gigantic Russian is far superior to the dwarfish Japanese. But opposite is the truth. Picture to your imagination a 'Suttee' and tell me whether you do not believe that there is a thing in man which cannot be measured in any way. That thing is the spiritual element in man. The real prosperity of a nation does not depend upon its physical and intellectual development but depends on something outside matter. It is not the sword that the arm of flesh wieldeth that gains victories, but it is something which can not be valued, measured or calculated.

I dare say most of you have seen Puri and have walked by the seaside. I dare say you have seen numerous shells which differ in colour which all belong to Oyster life. In that class of Oyster it is a shell that is of value. But there is another kind of Oyster which develops pearls.

If I am asked to compare human nature with anything I should compare it with Oyster. The soul to like the pearl. The proper development of a man will be the harmonious development of his physical, mental and spiritual nature. To find any nation in which the three elements are harmoniously blended is quite impossible.

There are many things in a boy's life which are beyond the control of his parents. So there are many things in a nation which are beyond the control of wisest statemen. One of these things is the harmonious blending of the physical, intellectual and spiritual elements. In the development of all these, there is necessarily a development of one element at the cost of the others. The three do not go together. In India the spiritual element was the element most

cultivated. Our ancestors attained the highest pitch of spiritual culture. Even in these days those of the west who have studied Eastern ideas confess that Indians knew something of the occult world which the modern European does not know. Our ancestors saw God in every leaf of the tree, in every grain of sand and in every drop of water. But the waves of western education and western literature have swept away all these.

In these days we find over students sadly lacking that spiritual element which was the chief element in the life of their forefathers. I have felt that those who have got western education and have acquired western habits cannot appreciate the moral value of a "Suttee" or that moral greatness of a Prahlad. Are not the temples now like weeping willows standing on the graveyard of the ancient spiritual culture ? Do you possess anything which may be called invincible power, a power that rises above material power and approaches divine power ? Shall we again return to the life of our ancestors ? The solution of the question depends upon your career. I must ask you that if you want to have the portion of joy which God has set apart for you, if you want to realise that a soul exists within, a soul that is capable of doing things which only divine power can do, you must seek the path trodden by your ancestors. You cannot get on this world without faith. I believe a man who has no confidence in himself cannot attain self-respect, a man who has no faith on others cannot have moral courage. I may tell you that all that I wish you to do is, in whatever you do, remember that you had glorious predecessors, that if you have heart within and God over-head your life will be one of which you will not be ashamed nor will your country have cause to be ashamed of you.



II

DUTY OF AN INDIAN CHRISTIAN

[In the year 1915 Madhusudan had gone to Allahabad to attend the All-India Christian Conference. There, he was requested to preside over the Second Session in the absence of Raja Harnam Singh. The following is an extract from his presidential address delivered at that session.]

In this speech Madhusudan has dealt upon the dichotomy of East and West and the dual identity of Indian Christians. Stressing upon the spiritual nature of human beings, he had advised his Christian brothers to contribute their might for the growth of Indian nationalism.]

It would be desirable for us to take a proper measure of our responsibility in terms of human nature in a conference with a noble object before us.

Man is born an infant. The infant is a lump of selfishness. The child of nobody else but of itself. The child considers itself an absolute and despotic monarch of the whole world. My watch, your hat, his gharry [vehicle] and horse are all his. He wants them and he must have them. If you do not meet with his demands he is offended and cries. Selfishness is the ruling principle in the child's nature. Gradually as the child grows and goes to school, he learns to respect the right of other children — his play mates. Experience teaches him that he cannot take away the toy of another child. This experience I may say is the dawn of altruism. When the child grows to be a young man or woman and marries, attains fatherhood or motherhood, the altruistic principle is developed in a higher degree. The man then learns to live for others. He learns to sacrifice his own comforts, to secure the comforts of his family and children. So when we examine human life, we find that with the decadence of selfishness there is a proportionate development of the altruistic principle in man till the altruistic principle attains to a higher standard to be found in family life. In most cases there the development ends. In some

cases it attains a higher degree of development and he learns to live for the community to which he belongs. In a still smaller number of cases it attains a still higher stage and man begins to live for his nation and for his country. In a few cases man appreciates living for the human race. We are undertaking today something which presupposes within us the desire to live for others. We have attained a higher standard of life, we have come here as representatives of people who have not attained that standard of life in which they can think of others. We are to undertake to work for them, to train them up and to think of them.

The nation is more selfish than a child. This is the teaching of history and our personal observation. In the case of a child there is hopes of correction. In the case of nation there is no hope. One who wishes to serve a nation will have to serve the most selfish and unreasonable constituency. We know every Englishman claims Milton and Shakespeare as his nation's poets. We Indians say Kalidas was our national poet. Bengalees heap glory on Michael Madhusudan. Did the nation do anything to make them comfortable. Where was the Bengalee nation when Michael died in a hospital and had a pauper's burial ? The nation does nothing for its man and yet claims him as if it were his parents. If you have a child and you have a great faith in his future judging from his intelligence and if you go round and tell your neighbours that you have got a very promising child and you ask them to bear the expenses of his education, I can assure you that you will not get any money but the character of a fool, but let your child grow a useful man, you will be ignored and the nation will say that child is theirs. So I say a nation is most unreasonable in its demand, most selfish and to any one who is anxious and desirous of serving a nation I say "Do not expect any credit for what you have done for the nation. Be prepared to do all you can but do not expect any credit. Be merged in the nation, be lost in the nation. You can have no independent individual life without the nation but your life must belong to the nation. I see the river Ganga there. It has been winding its course for hundreds of miles receiving worship and homage from millions of Hindus. That is the individual homage. The river goes on winding its course and it falls into the ocean which is the picture of the nation. It loses its individuality

when it joins the sea. There is no Ganga or Yamuna there. The homage paid to Ganga and Yamuna is no more to be paid there. If you want to increase the power of the nation, lose your individuality. Then you will see the power of the nation rise in waves. You may be lost but you have actually contributed to the power, to the durability and to the glory of your nation.

India represents the East and England the West. The two countries represent two different types of civilisation, the result of the environments of life in the two countries. In India man saw the rising sun, the glorious sky, beautiful streams rippling along the way the shining moon reflects on the streams and the sea. Man found nature beautiful and in his primitive stage he thought nature was his mother, a loving mother — a kind mother. Man argues "If I have such a kind mother in nature, how kind and how loving must be the Creator of the Universe." What was the result ? The result was the oriental culture and development of the spiritual element in man. Man has two elements the spiritual and the physical. In England man saw what ? The clouds hid the face of the sun, the chill wind threatened to kill him, the sea rolled and threatened to drown him. He looked up to nature and declared "Thou art my worst enemy. I will fight with thee and conquer thee, for without conquering thee I can not live." So there man set about fighting with nature whereas in India man worshipped nature. The result of this has been that while in India you find the culture of religion, philosophy and poetry; in England and Europe you find the culture and cultivation of sciences and what is science but the conquest of nature by man so that nature might contribute towards his comfort.

Two opposite types of civilisations have met at a considerable degree in the Indian Christian Community. The Christians will have to determine what should be their attitude to their non-Christian brethren in India. The Indian Christians have within them an oriental nature that is the basis of their national character. That nature gives attention to the cultivation of culture of the spiritual nature whereas West gives prominence to the physical part of human nature. Shall we allow the Western Civilisation to swamp the type of civilisation which is natural with us or shall we simply graft the West on the East. In this country mango grafting is very common. There is a seedling

and to the seedling is engrafted the branch of a foreign tree. There is an object in choosing a seedling. Because it is indigenous it soon grows healthy in this climate, it draws nourishment from its native soil and then feeds the foreign branch engrafted on it. Reverse the process and the result will be most unsatisfactory. So unless we keep our oriental nature and engraft on it the western type of civilisation (which we must adopt under the peculiar condition of our present life) the result to the country cannot be satisfactory. We have our nation's history, the glorious achievements of our ancestors and our traditions. These are the nourishments which will feed our life. Our oriental nature will draw nourishment from all these and feed itself as well as the foreign branch which is engrafted.

"Christian", the word denotes one who finds his ideal of life in Christ. I am talking purely like a layman which I am. What is the most prominent fact in Christ's life ? The thing that impressed me most forcibly when I was a Hindu and induced me to embrace Christianity was the prayer "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" uttered by Jesus at the time of his crucifixion. It struck me that human nature could not rise higher than that. I could not have a better ideal What these words mean ? These words are to me (as they ought to be to everybody else who tries to understand them) the trumpet proclaiming to the world the complete subordination of the physical element in man to his spiritual nature, if I may use such an expression. The West has all along been taught to value the material parts of human nature. When East and West met nineteen hundred years ago and the teachings of Christ went to Europe, Europe resisted it. But for Christ Europe would have been a barbarous country. The East teaches "Let one die for the happiness of others". We are Indians and we must side with those who stand for morality, religion and righteousness and spiritual advancement.

The question for every man is "where is your position?" Every one has a particular place in the nation. I do not believe that I was sent by God without having a particular place in a nation assigned to me. It is for every individual to find out his duty. Every brick in the building fills a place and you can tell how much weight it holds. Such is the case with every one of us. Find your place and take your stand there. It does not matter what the world thinks of you or says to you.

When I was in my mother's womb and drew nourishment from my mother's blood I did not know anything of this world. I had no connection with the external world and when death comes and I close my eyes I shall be living but without any connection with the world When my relation with the world ceases I shall commune with my conscience and my God and if at that time God says --"Thou hast done thy duty --" I do not care what the world thinks of me.



III

DIGNITY OF LABOUR

[At the Bihar Young Men's Institute Hall, Patna Madhusudan had delivered a lecture on 'Dignity of Labour' on the 17th February, 1924. The lecture had been published in the daily 'The Express' published from Patna as reported by its special correspondent. Justice Sir John A.S. Buchnil of the Patna High Court had presided over the meeting.]

NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT

Volcanic eruptions bring up to the surface the things hidden in the bowels of the earth. Social upheavals force on our attention the feelings of a population. The recent Non-Co-operation movement was a social upheaval. I do not wish to look at the political aspect or significance of the movement. What were the most striking features of this movement? It first appealed and appealed forcibly to the student community. Boys who spent their infancy and a part of their boyhood in remote villages, left their village life, changed their dress, their habits of daily life and pursued with vigour and ardour the study of a foreign language with a view to secure some high official position or to one of the learned professions — these boys and young men left their school and college and took to plying the Charkha. Did these young men believe that the earnings of plying Charkha would gratify the ambition with which they took to English education? Did they expect that the Charkha would gratify their pecuniary appetite?

A short time after they returned to their places in schools and colleges. These facts have a lesson for us if we do not shut our eyes. They prove the existence of a keen desire for manual occupation. The head is stocked with knowledge, the hand is starved. The famished hand took to this occupation just as a starving man would eat any food without pausing to enquire whether it was healthy or not.

True they returned to their colleges and schools to resume

their studies but we would be making a great mistake if we believe that the hand's demand for occupation has died out. 'Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do' is an old saying which we should always bear in mind.

NON-CO-OPERATION AMONG MASSES

Then let us see how this social upheaval affected the masses. The poor peasant who does not get two proper meals a day paid his mite for getting Swaraj. What does swaraj mean to him ? It means to him the dawn of an era when he would live more comfortably, when he would earn higher; in a word to him swaraj means an improved economic condition. The peasants's hands are his assets in life. He earns his bread by manual labour.

VALUE OF UNIVERSITY DEGREES

We meet everyday young men, graduates of our universities hawking their degrees. They ask for the recommendation of a man who had no education but commands wealth, and in nine cases out of ten the rich man's recommendation carries greater weight with the officials than the university degree. What does this prove ? It proves that money is valued more than intellectual culture. Brain is a high discount. Why is this so? Because brain has failed to earn money. This failure is due to want of occupation in which intellectual equipment is in demand. Brain which is the most valuable and most powerful force in human society is a waste product for want of a market.

HAND AND LAND

The peasant's assets are his hands. The zamindar's assets are his lands. Culture of land is agriculture, Culture of hand is industry. I am aware that agriculture has been called an industry, but differentiation on the basis of their essentials should not place agriculture in the category of industries. A branch of manual labour which affords facilities for a progressive culture of the hand securing higher wages at successive stages should be properly called industry. This is not the case with the hand working on land. The man who drives a plough, sows seeds or weeds the fields, will not earn higher wages by the culture of the hand. There is no scope for attainment of a more remunerative skill in the agriculturist's occupation.

Now take the case of a carpenter, he begins by making packing

cases. By culture he may learn to make a lantalus which you see before you. Mark the progress in a corresponding rise in the daily wages of the man. Let me assure you that the man who made the tantalus with two snakes with their expanded hoods guarding the bottles was first taken into my service for making packing cases. His initial wages were 6 annas a day and in two year's time he was earning one rupee a day and the market value of his handiwork left at least 4 annas a day to his employer. This gives a rise in wages from Rs 133 to Rs.365 in two years.

Please see the silver "attardan" on the table. This is the third one of its kind in the world. On close examination you will observe the higher skill of the hand. It is the result of culture of the hand which secures higher wages to the artisan. But it should not be overlooked that the training cost me a good sum of money, not to speak of the time and personal attention it cost me. These I count as my sacrifice to the cause of industry.

Whether we admire or punish it, we pay for dexterity of the hand. The payment is voluntary in some cases and involuntary in others. We pay the pickpocket as well as the magical performer. Voluntary or involuntary it is Payment of manual dexterity.

BRAIN AND HAND

The forces which are nature's endowment on man are his brain and hands. The hands work under the guidance and control of the brain.

I have shown above that the hand which works on land does not need the guidance of the brain.

Over 98 per cent of our population work on land.

THE RELATION OF LAND TO HAND

Land does not grow in area. Hands grow in numbers with the growth of the population. A holding which sustained a family of 5 members 30 years back now has to support 12 or 15 members. In some cases this extra pressure is relieved by emigration but in most cases low standard of vitality is accepted as inevitable.

LAND AND GOVERNMENT

A considerable portion of the yield of land goes to Government in this province. By far the largest portion of the income of Government is land revenue. In England there is no land revenue.

I should ask my countrymen to bear in mind this fact when they are asked to accept economic principles of England as applicable to this province.

At present moment the settlement officers are busy in measuring every field in Orissa while lakhs and lakhs of Oriyas are working in the neighbouring provinces in factories started and maintained by foreign capital. The East India Company's first factories were started in Orissa and though Orissa has been more than a century under British rule Government has not done anything to help the people in the establishment of a single manufacturing factory.

LANDLESS UNTOUCHABLES

We had in the past and have now a section of population which is landless. They have no occupation assigned to them by the custom of the province and most of these people belong to the untouchable class. Being untouchable they live in the outskirts of villages away from influence, social and moral, of the residents of the village. Their isolated position has driven them to earn their livelihood as criminals.

GERMANY IN INDIA

When I visited the huge factories in Germany I saw how the ponderous wheels running thousands of miles away from India had laid the foundation of a commercial empire here, how Germany levied a tax on all classes of men and women, from, the child who played with the German toys to the aristocratic lady who entertained her guests with music on the piano. The commercial empire needs no police to prevent breach of the peace, no tax collector to sell your moveables, to realize the arrears of taxes, no personal feelings of retaliation against any person. The Indian's everyday life was regulated by the Directors of the huge factories thousands of miles away.

THREE GREAT FORCES

Here I saw an illustration of what money can do when it is converted into Power. A machine is money converted into a reproductive power. It is a power whose influence invested in manufacturing factory can be kept under the control of the investor if the Articles of Association of the Company be framed with a view to that.

I was convinced that our first step towards the elevation of India

was to establish economic self-government on the rocky foundation of the common forces are "dhan, jan and man". I thought why can't we have similar institutions in India where there is greater need for them, where millions of hands are famished, where the brain is a waste product and where money has lost its value and represents a pool of stagnant water without virtues of a running stream.

DIFFICULTIES OF COMBINATION

When I tried to work out the details in my mind, the facts which distressed me were the difficulties of raising money for building up a new industry to be run on European line. The factory building has to be constructed, the machines imported, men trained to work the machines satisfactorily and the demands for the outturn created—all these required at least ten years. To train men to work machines satisfactorily requires more time and is far more expensive than the public imagine. The public are apt to form an idea of the cost of training a workman from the expenses one incurs in educating an orphan. They forget that in the case of the orphan you have to provide for the necessities of one's life and his books and schooling fee. In the case of training an ordinary labourer to become a successful operative there are other considerations. To begin with, you have to select an intelligent adult labourer. Such a man has his burdens of life. He supports his family by his daily labour. You must pay him at least the amount he is earning at the time. This means a monthly scholarship of at least Rs. 25. You must train up at least a hundred men to run a factory. Then you have to pay for the power, the coal etc. to run the machines. I have found that it takes at least one year to make a labourer a successful operative. But the most expensive item is that during this year you have to supply the raw materials on which he practises. This item is very expensive. To this is to be added the damage to the machines every now and then.

JOINT STOCK COMPANY

The system of doing business on joint stock company line was unknown to India. It is a new institution. The caste system divided the artisan classes; each caste followed a particular line of industry, mutual confidence which is the basis of doing business for the interest of the share-holders, who belong to different castes is not possible. It is not possible to induce a high caste Hindu gentleman and a share-

holder of the untouchable class to run a joint business for common benefit. This accounts for the absence of business on joint stock lines in India.

In India the individual works for his gain. He is paid for the out-turn of his hand. This is suitable for a primitive state of society where cultivation is the chief occupation of man. But when with the increase of population the land fails to supply occupation to the growing population and the wants of daily life increase, it is necessary to increase the out-turn of the hands. It is necessary to find out some method by which one man could do fifty men's work. This is done by placing a machine in the hands of an operative. The man then comes to possess fifty hands, more powerful than Ravanaeswar of Ramayan. But a factory requires a large initial capital. In Europe the capital is raised by the issue of shares. I have shown above that the joint stock company system is foreign to India. The development of a new industry means initial loss for a number of years. The Indian knows only one kind of investment and that is lending money. The money-lender counts his interest from the moment he pays the money. The idea that his money would fetch no interest a few years is not consistent with his idea of investment. The money-lender will lend money on the fifth per cent interest, fully aware of the fact that he would not get back either the principal or interest for twenty years but nevertheless he will advance money if under the terms of the mortgage the interest runs from the date of the deed. But I am certain you cannot get a single money-lender to lend money on the condition that he would get no interest for the first ten years, but will have a punctual payment of interest annually at the rate of 25 per cent after five years from the date of the deed. The Indian capitalist will invest money in litigation on the chance of recovering it from the property should the party to whom he supplies funds win the case. He will continue supplying funds for the Privy Council appeal even after two successive defeats in the trial in the lower court and the High Court. Nothing is more uncertain than the result of a litigation, yet I have known lawyers who well understand the uncertainty about the result of a litigation advancing money on the chance of winning a case. They would advance hundreds of thousands on this wild goose chase but would not invest ten rupees in a Joint Stock company. The reason for this is

to be found on a well known trait of human character— man will do what he has been accustomed to do; he distrusts whatever is new.

FAILURES

Unfortunately Bengal's first attempt to develop industries was started at the time of Bengal partition. The people had suffered from a political wrong. The partition was considered as a division of the national life. The national life of a population is made up of relationship by blood, or past history of traditions whose influence on life begins in the cradle. When you cut up these sacred ties by the sudden stroke of a political sword you shake the nation's life to its foundation. The people started agitation. When the ocean is agitated by a storm, every drop of water joins in forming the mighty waves which dash against the sides of the ship, close over its deck and give a watery grave to the vessel, its cargo and its crew. The ocean then presents an impressive spectacle of the unity and destructive powers of its water but that is not the proper moment to embark in search of treasure in an unknown distant land without a chart.

The move for industrial development at the time was purely political in its character. It was a menace to the manufacturers in England. The prime movers were men whose only contribution to the cause was platform eloquence. Eloquence roused the nation's feelings and people who commanded cash, subscribed to the industrial undertakings. The nation in its excitement lost all balance of reason and calm cool calculations which a measure intended to improve the economic condition of a country requires. The movement was a manoeuvre in a political warfare. The political storm subsided when the partition was revoked and the industrial institutions languished and were finally closed leaving the share holders wiser but poorer.

The legacy of this industrial movement is a distrust in joint stock management. This is a great stumbling block in an attempt to popularize joint stock line of business.

UTKAL TANNERY

There is full history of the institution in a report written by an expert who had been deputed by the Government of Bengal to visit the place and write a report. That report has been published. The report contains a history of the factory, a detailed valuation of its

belongings and lands, his recommendation to form a joint stock company, his calculation showing how a dividend of 16.75 shall be earned. The report will show that the Utkal Tannery was not a jetsam or flotsam of the Bengal Swadeshi movement.

SACRIFICE

The first thing necessary to induce the Indian capitalist to invest in joint stock companies is to find out men who from motives of benevolence and patriotism would agree to bear the loss of a factory in its infancy and when it has passed the period of risks and loss and when there is a ready market for its outturn and the payment of dividend from the date the company begins to work, is a certainty, then and then only should the founder of the factory transfer the factory to a joint stock company on the present value of the factory without any reference to the loss he suffered at the early stage of the factory. The loss incurred during the experimental stage should find no place in the valuation of the present assets of the concerned. The loss should be his sacrifice to the cause of industry. It is not reasonable that the company should pay for the loss, because they were not consulted about it. We pay a man at the market value of his service and do not assess them on the basis of the amount his education costs his father. I believe that in the present state of India every man who conceives an idea which he believes will improve the economic or political or social condition of India should consider it his sacred obligation to his motherland to shoulder the responsibility of supplying all that is necessary in the shape of money, time and application till his nebulous concept is materialized and may be presented to the public as an object whose usefulness may be tested by the public.

It is not my wish to find fault with those who have followed the contrary principle of materialising their ideas with other people's money, but during forty years of public life spent in the most backward part of India, I have acted in perfect unison with this principle. It has at least one advantage and that is that a man is more careful with his own money than he is with other people's money in the experimental stage. His failures teach him to be careful, they do not breed public distrust in the ultimate success of the project. There is a cry for swaraj through the length and breadth of India. This means a demand for accession of political power. This war with the Government has

been raging for over thirty years. During this period the economic problems have been neglected. The result is progressive increase of poverty. The vitality of the population has got lower and lower everyday. No attempt has been made to improve the economic condition of the masses. I have never heard any suggestion to improve the economic condition of the mass. The poverty of the masses has been made the main plank of criticism of Government administrations, but never has any scheme been drawn up to bring together the forces available to us and lay the foundation of an economic empire.

PREVENTION OF COW KILLING

Our everyday life is being regulated by the directors of the huge factories in Germany. I saw how the hides of the dead cows were converted into leather goods in requisition in the Germany army. I was struck with the difference in the two countries. In India we are engaged in council resolutions, platform speeches and lengthy memorials to stop the slaughter of cows, while German factories were turning out valuable leather goods from the hides of dead cattle. It struck me if Indians only learnt how to manufacture leather goods from dead cattle hides which is cheaper than butcher's hides the slaughter of cows would stop as a natural consequence of the principle of supply and demand.

It is not known to the public that almost all the tanneries which had been started and closed within the last quarter of a century in Bengal and Bihar used only butcher's hides for the manufacture of leather. Stop the export of all dead cattle hides, let our tanneries use them in the manufacture of leather, and the slaughter of cows and bullocks must stop automatically.

INDUSTRIAL WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND GERMANY

The number of dead cattle hides exported to Germany is simply amazing. Long before the late war in Europe, I saw the effect of this export trade on the industrial economics of India. I drew the attention of the Government of India to it by correspondence and by interpellation in the then Viceregal Council; but the suggestions of non-officials are always received with contempt. My suggestions shared the same fate. But I foresaw the value of learning the German method of treating the dead cattle hides and accordingly engaged

the services of two Germans in the Tannery.

Both these men were taken prisoners soon after the war broke out. You hear in the temple of Jagannath at Puri and in other temples the mingled sounds of trumpets, songs and drums early in the morning. There is not much music in them, because they are meant to rouse the Gods from sleep. There is a great resemblance between the Hindu Gods and the official Gods in the olympic height of Simla.

The blooming of guns, the clatter of swords and the cries of the wounded soldiers roused the Indian Government from sleep. They discovered that Germany made 48 million of army boots from the hides exported from India. The Government put a duty of 15 per cent on hides exported, with a rebate of 10 per cent on such portions as were used in the leather manufacturing factories within the British Empire. The object of the rebate was to give an economic advantage to the British Empire excluding India.

It is not necessary for me to ask you to read between the lines of this Government's order. But what was the result ? The leather manufacturers in the United Kingdom and its allied dominions failed to use the Indian hides and the result of this export trade is over 12 crores and about 70 per cent of this quantity is exported from Calcutta to Germany.

ECONOMIC SLAVERY

What is the relation between two countries one of which supplies raw materials out of which the other manufacture goods to supply the needs of daily life. The supplier of the raw materials gets the coolie's wages, the manufacturer earns the wages of the skilled it not in our power to burst the fetters of this slavery in the economic world? There is an organisation and capital collection of raw materials, there a capital for the costs of export; what is wanted is the employment of these for the manufacture of leather goods. The export-trade is entirely in the hands of our Mohammedan brethren and so is the sale of finished leather goods from Europe. They control the two extremities of the industry which pay the least, and assign to the Germans the part of the industry which is most remunerative. It is proposed to teach the scientific part of this industry in the Ravenshaw College and give practical training in the factory.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

I have been requested by gentlemen in high positions, both official and non-official to take their sons and relations as apprentice in the Tannery with a view that they may learn the industry. These gentlemen have not the slightest insight into the nature of this industry. They seem to put it on a level with wood industry or metal industry or even the khadar industry. In all other industries the material, on which the artisan or the operative works, comes from nature's store house. All metals are dug up from the bowels of the earth; so it is with wood, cane, bamboo and everything else. There is no such thing in nature as leather. The skin is given by nature to the animal as a protection from sun and rain and is intended by nature to perish with the carcase of the animal. This nature's gift has in the first instance to be converted into an object from which the king wants lining to his hat and accoutrement for His Majesty's military dress, His Majesty's judges require covers for their seats on the Bench and the peon wants a pair of foot wear. In this industry man is the creator, so to speak of the materials on which the chamar or the operative works. It is therefore an essentially scientific industry. The first process in the industry is a scientific process. Thus it supplies occupation to our educated men. That was my main reason for selecting this industry as it gives occupation to our educated men. The landless untouchable classes have been a source of anxiety to me from the early days of my industrial activities. Within the last few years there has been an attempt to raise their social position, to place them on a level with the higher classes. Their friends have appealed to feelings of humanity, to reason, to the state of thing in other countries. It is not my province to test these methods by the actual results achieved. I shall give you an account of the method I pursued. I directed my attention to the economic aspect of the position of this class. I followed the principles by which General Booth succeeded in uplifting the fallen and the despised in other countries of the world. First, give a man work by which he can earn enough to keep him comfortable and then talk to him of the moral and religious side of human nature.

I shall read here a portion of a report written by an expert who was deputed by the Bengal Government to write a history of the Utkal Tannery.

"The Utkal Tannery is the pioneer in this line of work in whole of India. A good deal of money has been spent and a lot of trouble taken in organising this work. Lizard skins are not easily available in quantity and cannot be bought to the market like the hides and the skins of the domestic animals e.g. the hides of the cattle or skins of the goat or the sheep. Lizards live in the jungles and seem to abound in the hills of Orissa. The Proprietor Mr Das baaded together a number of the hill tribes and got them to catch the lizards in the jungles where they are killed and skinned. The skins are salted and brought to the Tannery at Cuttack by these aborigines. It is reported that in the beginning these men had to be lavishly remunerated for taking to this work, the Proprietor paying often as much Rs. 2 per skin. This has been going on for well over a decade and at least lakhs of lizard skins have been tanned at the Tannery. About 50,000 skins are still in stock. The man have now got used to the collection of the skins and make their living by it. They are now paid about annas six per skin.

If the collection be so difficult the tanning is not easy either. The process ordinarily followed in tanning goat or sheep skins is not quite successful with lizard skins. Special process to suit the nature of these skins had to be worked out and a good deal of money was wasted in the early trials and failures. During my visit to the Tannery I saw hundreds of lizard skins which were absolutely ruined by wrong tannage. The process now used is quite satisfactory and the quality of the outturn is excellent. The lizard skins of the Utkal Tannery are being requisitioned not only all over the India but also in England and America. If properly conducted there appears to be a bright prospect for this line of work. Both European and American fancy leather goods manufacturers extensively use such leather as are made from lizard, crocodile and pig skins. In absence of the genuine article they have often to be satisfied with imitation leathers which are produced by embossing cow hide or sheep skin leathers with characteristic grain patterns of crocodile, lizard or the pig. If they get well finished genuine article it may be expected they will welcome it cordially and pay good prices. Only recently the writer got an enquiry from the British Trade Commissioner if he would name Indian tanneries capable of supplying tanned lizard skins as they were in growing demand in England."

[Madhusudan showed to the audience samples of lizard skins in several colours. He also read out correspondence showing the great demand for them in Europe, America and Japan.]

The dying and finishing are the most difficult part of the work. These are done by a man, who is innocent of the alphabet of any language. I took him on service on Rs. 7 a month to draw water and now I am paying him Rs. 100 a month. You have seen the demand for his work in the countries where we send our young men to learn the leather industry. The man is still illiterate. Who can say after this there is no dignity in labour? Teach a man some work which will command the appreciation of the world and you raise his social position.

LINE OF ECONOMIC GRAVITATION

What is wanted is a change in the line of economic gravitation. The people require to be taught that the present line of economic gravitation has to be changed. It is not conducive to the growth or prosperity. The inevitable consequence of this is permanent poverty of the nation. The whole nation is tied to the flywheel of the present administrative machinery. The Government revenue is derived from lands. The Zamindar is Government's collection agent. The peasant pays his rents to the zamindar. Revenue feeds the administrative machinery. Hence I say nearly the whole nation is tied to the flywheel. As the wheel revolves every revolution increased the momentum and increases suffering results to the hands tied to it. The hands tied to lands are tied to the administrative flywheel. They turn the wheel which grinds them. All money gravitates towards land. The man with money either buries it or invests it in land. This constitutes the present line of economic gravitation. The people should be taught that money is a power. To be a power their investments must be under their direct control. I have shown that the yield of lands he cannot control; the clouds above, the daily increasing costs of administration, the additional cesses and above all the landlord and tenants. Acts and the constant friction and litigation with the tenants leave very little room for the zamindari control.

Every settlement reduces the value of the Zamindar. This is so in temporary settled estates of Orissa. Every accession to the tenants rights is so much relaxation of Zamindar's control. With the

Zamindar his wealth is source of weakness not of power. He is in constant fear of every *Hakim*.

Most people in India invest in Government securities, The late war proved that Government securities lose their intrinsic value. During the war Government securities were reduced in value job while the value of shares of some companies rose twenty to twenty five times of their face-value. At the present day German marks have ben very much reduced. Before the war 25 marks were equal to a £ but now a £ is equal to several lakhs of marks. The value of German Government coin has gone down amazingly low, but can you get industrial products of Germany cheaper? I know some Indians ordered machines, making remittance in German marks , because the catalogues showed the price in marks, but they found out that their calculations were incorrect. The change of Government will reduce the value of current coin but when money has been converted into power no change of Government will affect the value of the power.

The leather industry if placed on a proper footing will benefit all classes. Very few people know how the hide export business affects the poor peasants of this province. Every peasant has his cattle. They are the companions of his daily life. He wants them to cultivate his field. What happens to the hides of the cattle when they die ? By the custom of the country the Hindu peasant is not allowed to sell the hides. The result is that they are taken by the chowkidars of the village or by some untouchable classes. In the Feudatory States of Orissa the state raises a large revenue. To the Hindu Rajah the sale of hides is not forbidden by the shastra but the shastras apply to the poor peasant. The poor peasant loses his plough cattle, his lands lie uncultivated, he has not the means to replace the dead cattle, but the hides benefit the Rajas, the exporters and the Germans.

If a committee of influential men of the two communities, Hindu and Mohammedans, be appointed to study the details of hides trade; I am sure there a common platform will be found where all may join in the development of this industry, as a means of improving the economic condition of many classes and reduce to a very large extent the killing of old cattle which are unfit for agriculture or dairy purposes. These are bought for their hides.

I have drawn your attention to the difficulties of raising money for the development of an industry on a scale which should use the hides which are exported to Germany. For this you require a network of Tanneries throughout the country. Thus it is necessary to teach both the scientific and the practical branches of this industry. I saw this educational needs fully fifteen years ago, and with a view to provide for the experimental work for the student I raised plantations in the factory premises.

[There the lecturer showed a scheme prepared by an expert.]

There are organisations for the collection of hides in every part of the country. All that is necessary is to induce the capitalists who are carrying on export trade to send their men to learn the industry. When he has learnt it, he comes back and starts a tannery in the locality. The hides now exported will be turned into leather and from the leather industry the capitalists will gather good profit. My leather industry has crossed its infancy but is temporarily sick due to lack of running capital. I appeal all the gentlemen present here to purchase shares of Utkal Tannery, so that it will be in a position to compete and show profit. By this act the shareholders will get good dividend and proper encouragement will be given to the labour class.



IV

DUTY OF AN EDUCATED INDIAN

[A meeting was held at Cuttack Printing Company Hall on 26th April, 1906 to discuss the incidents of Barisal — the illegal detention and unfair trial of Mr. Surendra Nath Banarjee. Mr. Das had delivered a speech on 'Duty of An Educated Indian' in the said meeting as its president. The details of the meeting alongwith the presidential address were published in the weekly 'Utkal Dipika' in its issue of 28 April, 1906.]

Gentlemen !

Lord Bacon says, "When any of the four pillars of Government are mainly shaken, or weakened (which are, Religion, Justice, Counsel and Treasure) men have need to pray for fair weather.

In the peculiar state of things in India, religion is not one of the pillars of the Government. The financial position of India does not supply a strong pillar either. So the two pillars which mainly support the Government of this country are Counsel and Justice. The recent events at Barisal — especially the trial of Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee — have shaken the pillar of Justice. So this is an occasion for prayer and not for eloquent speeches or impassioned utterances. We, as educated men, owe a peculiar duty to our uneducated countrymen, though uneducated they form the strongest and the most valuable part of the nation. We also owe a duty to our rulers, who belong to a foreign nation. We have in the course of our education imbibed to a certain extent the ideas of the ruling nation.

These duties, I mean, our duties to our people and the duties to our rulers require us, on the one hand to guard against the intentions and motives of our rulers being misunderstood by our people, and on the other to guard against any infringement of the just rights of the people by any person in authority.

We should always bear in mind that sincere loyalty to the British throne is our paramount duty. To us — Indians — loyalty to throne is

a religious duty. Whatever might be the points of superiority of the Englishman over us, we do not yield to him in our loyal devotion to the British throne; on the contrary the obligations we owe to that throne are of a higher character, for, while an Englishman has to maintain the dignity, prestige and the honour of a constitutional king, we Indians enjoy the privilege of maintaining the dignity and gracious majesty of our King-Emperor.

When our ancestors welcomed; through the priests of the Jaggennath temple, the British army from Madras and invited the commanding officer to take possession of the country, they had unbounded faith and confidence in British Justice. However unworthy we might be of our ancestors we have continued to cherish that faith and confidence in British Justice.

In this universe law governs and rules supreme. Nature rules through her laws. Every breaker of Nature's law is punished by Nature, but Nature never suspends or holds her law in abeyance. Imagine the law of gravitation is suspended for one moment. The result can be better imagined than better described. To break law is one thing; a wilful disregard of law by one entrusted with the sacred duty of enforcing it amounts to a suspension of law. The trial of Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee, so far as the procedure followed has been published in the Newspapers, point to a state of things which suggests an analogy to a suspension of Nature's laws, and the feelings which the trial has roused in the people may to a certain extent be likened to the grave apprehension with which men wait an unknown and unprecedented change in Nature's laws. As an educated man, it should, under these circumstances, be our duty to cherish a hope that the British Constitution, British ideas of what is due to an accused, and halo of glory which the Justice of British Court has cast around the British throne will survive this unprecedented event as they have survived many revolutions in the history of the British nation.



V

LETTERS FROM LONDON

[Mr. Madhusudan Das was the first Oriya-elite to sail England and other European Countries (Ramahari Das was the first Oriya to go to England. He accompanied Raja Ram Mohan Roy in his journey to England as the care-taker of his cow). Madhusudan left India for England in the month of April, 1897 and returned to India in the month of November of the same year. He reached Cuttack on the 13th November, 1897 and was given a grand welcome for his successful journey. From London and Cairo, he had written five letters to the Editor of the Oriya weekly 'Utkal Dipika' anonymously and those were published in its issues of 17th August, 11th September, 16th October, 30th October and 6th November of 1897. The editor of Utkal Dipika, while reporting on the topic 'Discussion Regarding Orissa in England', in its issue of 20th November, 1897, had clarified that Mr. Das was the author of those letters. Out of those five letters, three letters written from London, are reprinted here].

FIRST LETTER :

Dear Sir,

Before I left England I was requested by several men to pay a visit to old Mr. T.E. Ravenshaw and convey to him their salams. The following account of my visit to him will be read with interests by a large number of people in Orissa and I hope you will not grudge it some space in your paper. I did not know Mr. Ravenshaw, I never met him in India; he had left the country before I returned to Orissa. I am glad indeed that I had the honour of meeting to him. I shall give a bare account of what I saw and heard making no comments." Paint me as I am" said Cromwell to his painter. No doubt that shows a really worthy man to the best advantage. Mr. Ravenshaw lives in Sussex about 5 miles from the three Bridges Station in the London and Brighton line. It is not far from Brighton for on a clear day you can see Brighton from the terrace of Mr. Ravenshaw's house. I went

to this place on Sunday. As I came out of the train, a short old man with grey beard walked up to me and accosting me "Mr. Das ?" shook hands as if we had been old friends of years. I said "Mr. Ravenshaw I am sorry you should have come all this way. Surely I would have found my way to your house." He replied "But I felt it my duty to come and met you here." We got into his brongham drawn by a pair of fine dark horses and drove off. After a few minutes he said "Excuse my asking this question. Are you a genuine Oriya ?" I said "every drop of blood in me was of Oriya origin." He said, "I am very fond of your race and I would talk more freely to an Oriya than to any other man." Then he said in Oriya "ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପିଲା ଖାଅ". These words were followed by the offer of a cigar (a veretable Oriya cigar.)

Mr. Ravenshaw took me all over the house, his gardens and all over his belongings. I had straw-berries and goose-berries from the trees, lovely branches of grapes from the hot house and flowers from the green house. He took me over to his cowshed and his diary. I saw the ferrets he uses in shooting rabbits as also his ground where I saw several rabbits and pheasants. I saw his horses and judging from the good animals he has I should think he is a good judge of horse flesh and takes interest in his horses.

Inside his house, in the drawing room, I was shown some silver jewellery made at Cuttack, portions of the hookah which he used when out in India.

I-- "Do you know Mr. Ravenshaw that the hookas as used in the Government House at Culcutta in the days of Warren Hastings ? I saw an invitation issued from the Government House with these words in a comer. 'Ladies and Gentlemen to bring their hookas.'

Mr. R.--"Oh yes, everybody smoke the hookah, we used to dine in white jacket and have the hookah under the table.

I saw beautiful paintings of his three sons. Two of them are now in India. All his sons joined army the youngest accompanied Lord Roberts in his celebrated march in Afghanistan, and died from the after consequences of it.

I saw one 'Katuri' and one knife which were made in Dhenkanal and were presented by the old Maharaja of Dhenkanal. I saw also two tusks and a lot of Gurjat weapons which were mostly from Keonjhar. Mr. Ravenshaw made kind enquiries of all the Rajas of the

Tributary Mahals. He made seaching enquiries regarding the disturbances in Keonjhar and Nayagarh. Fortunately acted as pleader in both these cases, I could give him all the information. But I was surprised at the dep insight he must have had into the character and disposition of the people and Rajas of Gurjat, and what was, more remarkable he had sufficient recollection of the character and disposition of individual Rajas to be able at the present day to divine as to how a particular man would act under given circumstances.

The most interesting part of his house is his workshop. It is simply perfectly equipped for an amateur workshop. From the tiny tools of a watch-maker to big lathes worked by a steam engine are to be found here and Mr. Ravenhaw can repair a watch as well as make a chair and kerosine lamp.

Mr. Ravenshaw has a strong desire to see Orissa once more. He offered to go out to India in connection with the present famine, but the Government of India said that they were not in need of any outside help. They would have saved money, saved many lives and saved many blunders, if they had availed themselves of the services of such a valuable old officer, especially as the services were gratuitous.

The old gentleman has a strong desire to see Orissa once more, and I think it will be a very good thing if his old friends in Orissa send him invitation and offer to pay his expenses. It will be graceful to the host and grateful to the guest. Mr. Ravenshaw has desired me to convey his salams to a number of gentlemen. This duty I must postpone till I return to Cuttack. Mr. Ravenshaw particularly requested me to spend a day with him before I return to Orissa, and I shall certainly avail myself of his hospitable offer; and I am sure when I return to Cuttack I shall have much to speak to you about this interesting warm hearted gentleman.

This morning I met (at a public meeting) a gentleman who was also a Commissioner of the Orissa Division for sometime. I asked him his present address. His reply was "But I shall be going away to one of these watering place in about ten days." Is not this a contrast ? I was delighted to receive the other days a few issues of Utkal Dipika. You have noticed with great joy the Times article on the settlement of Orissa. It seems to have inspired new hopes in you. A friend from Cuttack writing to me about the settlement in Orissa re-

fers to this article in the same strain. You have no ideas about the influence of Times. But in London it is a news paper and does not carry more influence than that. I am deeply interested in the permanent settlement of Orissa, but that subject I must receive for private correspondence.

London
12 July, 1897

Yours truly
An Uriya

SECOND LETTER :

Sir,

You hardly know what a large number of Indians are there in London. Most of them are students. I have been very much impressed with the absolute necessity of a house where they could be lodged together. They see a good deal of each other and also of the darkside of London life. They live scattered all over London, consequently those who are interested in them, and whose occasional visits would be of immense benefit to them, do not see anything of these young men. Gentlemen like Lord Stanley, Sir Charles Elliot, Mr. Lultman Johnson, Sir John Phear and I suppose many more whose sympathies in this direction I have not had opportunities of knowing, will be always glad to meet these young men if they could be lodged in one house. These young men will occupy the highest offices open to Indians. Their education here, especially the moral parts of it, should be such as would impress them with the responsibilities of their position. They owe a duty to their country i.e. they ought to present to their countrymen a higher standard of life. On the other hand they should not bring discredit on their education in England — the grandest country inhabited by the noblest nation on earth. The English people have no favourable opinion of the Indians. This impression is shared more or less by all classes of people. The only way to remove this impression is to prove its falsity by our life and dealings with the people. The work is easier among the higher classes with the exception of a certain class whose interest it is to see that the people of England or their representatives in the Parliament should not interfere in Indian matters. But this latter class form a minority who need not be reckoned with. But to remove the unfavourable impression from the trades people of London and to induce them as well as the

people in the country to take interest in Indian affairs is a gigantic work. But there is no chance of our ever accomplishing this if the visitors from India give fresh reasons for unfavourable opinion. It is absolutely necessary that every Indian who visits this country should live an honest and scrupulously moral life. He should by his life and in his dealings with the people show that the Indian has a clean heart under a dark skin. I do not mean to say England is the land of angels only; by no means, but need not waste our energies in preaching against English vice. One has to visit Hyde Park of Sunday evening to see how much their own countrymen give it to them. You can always get 50, 60 or 100 people to talk to. One can always get much help from the non-conformist ministers in getting up meetings where you can talk to the people. This no way costs some money, but that is very trifling considering the good, one does to his country. If the money that is spent in agitations in India were spent in this direction India would have had many more friends than she has now. I have had opportunities of talking over Indian matters to several M.P.s. Most of them are very good christian men. They are willing to take up one or two matters, and this too they will do if it comes at a time convenient to them. There is a sort of division of labour among them. A certain numbers study a subject, the others do not at all know anything about it. Most of the members do not remain in the house during discussions. But they all rush to their seats at the sound of the division bell and vote for or against the things. This happens almost daily during the dinner hours. It was so almost every evening I dined there, and I dined there pretty frequently within the last five weeks. August is the month when all people go away for holiday making. End of July is the end of London season. All the rich and influential people of London have already cleared out and the House of Commons when meet this evening, will not have more than 20 or 25 members, and by these the Indian budget is to be discussed. I do not believe that we shall be able to secure a majority unless the people extend sympathy to India. When that is secured then representatives in Parliament will be obliged to take interest in Indian matters. I shall illustrate my remarks referring to a little incident which occurred quite recently. The scene of the incident was in Sheffield. A retired Anglo-Indian on addressing a gathering gave the Indians a black character. One man in the assembly got up and interrupted him by

rewarking in indignout tone "We know one Indian, he is not much of a man look at, but I wish you English genelemen were as good as him." I was not present at this meting but the post brought me on account of the micident from a friend. I quote the words. They show our friend was not a very educated man. But it is just class of people whose sympathies and good opinion it should be our object to secure. The Indian budget will be presented this evening. They will begin at 3.30 and for what I have heard from several members who are going to speak I should not be surprised if they continue til 3 P.M. I will send you some account of it next week. While I am writing this the post bring me a ticket of admission into the house with Lord george Hamilton's complements." ... Nobody hear the discussion. I had made arrangements with an M.P. friend to go there tonight, but this is an additional reason. The arrests at Poona have created great excitement among some members from Ireland and some of them are going to move a resolution for a full extension of the English constitution to India. I cannot with propriety give you the names now, but you may expect an account of it a week after. Tomorrow's issue of the Times is sure to have the speeches and as the Indian mail leaves tomorow you may see something of the discussion in that paper which will reach India at the same time as this. But the report in the News papers are not to be trusted. The Times is a strongly conservative paper. It reports only the best arguments of the conservative party and ommitting all that is good in the speeches of the liberal party. I am certain no immediate practical good will come out of tonight's discussion but I believe they will carry one or two motions. One motion I know has the sympathy of some conservative members as well. The question of women's suffrage is of great importance to us. They are fighting hard for it, and I have no doubt they will succeed in it. The women of England are in full sympathy for India and when they get their suffrage I am sure the Indian budget will not be presented to empty benches. I wrote you on the previous occassion that some of the ladies who are the leaders of the 'Women's Liberal Fedration' are persons of superior intellect of unparalleled perseverance and wonderful strength of resolution. I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Josephine Butler who is admitted on all hands to be the most wonderful woman of England. I expect to met her at a committe meeting tomorrow. Lady Carlyle also

is very much interested in India. She is now in Scotland. I hope to go to Scotland next week to see her. The Countess of Warwick who is the leader of fashion of London is a warm advocate of female education in India.

I always thought that the legal status of the Native christian community of India was not satisfactory. The existing legislation regarding them is obscure, defective and unfair. It was of no use in talking over those things in India. I have been promised support from many quarters and what is most important from the India Office also. One of the members of the India Council who is an eminent lawyer, has worked very hard on this matter. Even on Tuesday last, that is day before yesterday (when everybody in the India Office was exceedingly busy) he gave me nearly two hours of his valuable time in discussing how we ought to lay the matter before the Government of India. The details will be known when I return to India and set myself to work out the thing.

I think I should close this letter with a few words about Sir Charles Elliot. I have been twice to his house since I wrote to you last. He is looking very much better, fully ten years younger. You know Lady Elliot was always amiable and exceptionally nice; this had made Sir Charles quite equipped. This constitutes half of these social virtues. While in India some of his friends used to say he had a good heart with a somewhat rough exterior, I have no doubt that is so. The official mentle is off and now you see the man. He is very much interested in the young Indians here and has promised his support to any scheme to provide a good home to these young men. I know Sir Charles was a good christian man but I had no idea of the great interest he takes in the mission work in India. He seemed to attach much importance to the kind reception which the London Boards of Directors of the several missions in India gave me. Of course I valued it very much though not without a felling that did not deserve it. But I should not have thoughts from what I knew of Sir Charles in India that he would lay such stress on it. This shows how incorrect may be an opinion based on observation of the official career of a man. Sir Charles made very kind enquiries of the Tributary Rajas of Orissa. I gathered from his conversation that he had spoken to Lord George Hamilton about me long before I called on him. This was very kind of him and shows that he is a friend of Orissa.

Talking of the National Congress he remarked that we Indians complain against laws on certain matters though they are not half so hard as the corresponding laws on the same subject in England. In referring to the Arm's Act he said that he had to pay a guinea annually for keeping a gun ? and that he had been fined 7 shillings the other day for having allowed his dog to go out unmuzzled.

There is a good deal of excitement here in connection with the Poona murders. I am sorry for Sir W. Wedderburn; he suffered a good deal and that was so because he believed Professor Gookle. I am glad that Sir William expressed his regret to the House on the earliest opportunity and the House received his explanation in very good spirit. I enclose an extract from the Times. But the cause of India must suffer from the conduct of men like Mr. Gookle. There is a great excitement here in connection with the revival of C.D.A. in India. I have received a heap of papers in connection with Mr. H.J. Wilson, M.P. He was in the Opium Commission and so you may remember his name.

I was glad to learn they have given a Rai Bahadur to our friend Babu Jogesh Chunder. He was very much willing to take up the Vice-Chairmanship of the District Board when his predecessor in office resigned it. I am very glad that they have appreciated the hard work he has done and is doing. If the local officers repose confidence on the non-official members and recognise good works, the local self-government institution in Indian would show steady progress.

London
5th August, 1897

Yours truly,
An Uriya

THIRD LETTER :

Sir,

The prospect of enjoying the instructive company of the scholar who has done more to place facts and figures regarding India before the English public than any man in the present century – the author of the interesting History of Orissa, – the well-known 'Indian Affairs' in the journalistic and political circles of London – would be worth any amount of trouble and travelling to any Indian. Add to this the hospitality of Lady Hunter who always has a smile and a kind word expressed in a sympathetic tone for any Indian; think of the 'literary

repat' as Charles Lamb would have called it, you may have in those ancient seats of learning and seats of ancient learning-- the Colleges of Oxford which lie in your way to "Oaken Holt", and you will pardon me if I congratulate myself in having been the lucky participator in all these good things on Monday last. These institutions-- the Colleges, have blunted the scythe of the time; Time flies over them to enhance and not to diminish their value. To turn black into grey is the work of 'Time' on the frail human figure, but here figures once white have turned black with age. Time which severs all bonds of friendship and ties of relationship has been powerless against the fellows of these Colleges, for when separated by death from the rest of world they lie together in their graves in the cloisters. While thousands of men have gone forth from these institutions and have revolutionised public opinion in every department of life it is remarkable how these institutions have retained their pristine condition. The repairs done in recent years have not received the finish which modern art is capable of giving. While I stood in the hall of the Divinity School, with my eyes greedily feasting on the fine carving in the ceiling, my imagination almost involuntarily raised before me the Temple of Juggonath at Puri. How I wished that those who were responsible for the bright English paints on that edifice, which Lord Northbrook called a most 'wonderful work of architecture' could visit these institutions and learn the lessons which ... to this Hall is called the market. What's a name ! And yes the name has been studiously presented to show that in the reign of Henry VIII it was used for that purpose for a shorttime. Our ancestors had a great regard for everything ancient. The European nations have feeling and they cultivate it. But alas ! we are losing that precious feeling, which is virtue; it is closely allied to the feeling one has to his ancestors. But I fear I am digressing. In my last letter I wrote to you about the Indian students in London. I have since learnt that the authorities of the University of Oxford and of Cambridge have appointed competent gentlemen of Indian experience to advise and guide the Indian students. At Oxford this duty is entrusted to Sir William Markby K.C.I.E.-- a retired judge of the High Court of Calcutta and at Cambridge this duty is undertaken by Mr. E.B. Cowell, at one time the Principal of the Sanscrit College at Calcutta. But unfortunately the Indian students do not seek their advice and avoid their company till they have seen

the worst of London and London has seen the worst of them. There have been cases where the Secretary of State for India had to provide funds for their passage back to India. I was shown a letter in which a young man asked an English gentleman -- a perfect stranger to him, "to get his clothes out of pawn," for without them he could not be called to the bar to which he expected to be soon. In this letter the young man says -- that his father allows him 200 pound a year, that on previous occasions he ran into debts by improper conduct and his father paid off his creditor. But his father declined to pay off his debts on the present occasion and therefore he applied to this English gentleman for help. I found the English gentleman was inclined to help him if the facts as stated were true. He made over the applicants card to me with a request to enquire into the matter. I gladly undertook the duty thinking that if any help was to be given, it should come from an Indian. These young men -- I mean some of them -- make themselves known as Indian Princes; that is the character in which they are known to the shop-keepers they deal with. A hair-cutter asked me the other day if I was a prince. I told him I wished I had been born a prince for at my age I would have developed into a king. This sad state of things called for a remedy.

I forgot to mention that in the Bodelian Library I saw a copy of Bacon's Essay presented by the author to the Duke of Buckingham. The binding of this volume is mounted with silve filigree work very much after the Indian fashion. This work is not to be seen in England now. There is a Sanscrit manuscript of Valmikee's Ramayan presented by Sir Thomas Strange 'with stitus and leaf-cutter'. The two are separate which shows that the combined stitus and leaf-cutter used in Orissa is of a more recent date. There are fragments of a Koran of 8th century in large letters of gold. I send you a reprint of the memorial for permanent settlement of Orissa. You will find in reprint the verdict of 'Indian Affairs' as it appeared in the columns of 'The Times' and the memorial as well with a few prefatory remarks. You are not perhaps aware, (I was not aware of it till I came here) that English public opinion of the present day is opposed to the principle of permanent assessment in this country. The opinion is supported by arguments which are as ingenious as they are elaborate. I should not enter into the discussion of the matter here. Whether the memorialists will succeed or not will depend entirely upon the

construction of certain words in which the promise of a permanent settlement was made. I cannot do better than quote here the opinion of a high official who in writing to me on the subject says, "but on first principles I am not enamoured of permanent settlement and would not introduce it now for the first time unless we are really pledged to it."

I leave England to-day for the continent. This letter has been written in great hurry. I hope your printer will have mercy on me and not have his full revenge on me for my bad handwriting. I am very sorry that for want of time I could not see Mr. Ravenshaw once more, but I have received a letter which shows what a looming heart the old gentleman has. I have written to him for permission to use the letter publicly and I hope he will give me permission. My object in seeking to give publicity to his letter is to give the people of Orissa an idea of the intensity of his feelings, for I feel the people will publicly reciprocate the feelings in a suitable manner if they only know Mr. Ravenshaw's feelings towards Orissa and the Uriyas.

London

10.9.1897

An Uriya

VI

LETTERS TO SHOILABALA

[Extracts from letters of Mr. Madhusudan Das to his daughter Shoilabala Das in England, 1906-07]

[A great mission of Mr Das's life was to awaken the spirit of nationalism in the people of Orissa, and in this mission he believed his daughter could render him real help. With a view to equip her for this important yet difficult work he sent her to England when she was in weak health in September, 1906. The main object of her visit to England was to have an idea of the system of education followed there to equip women for their proper activity in society. Her father was very fond of her and her indifferent health in a foreign country made him extremely anxious. The letters which he wrote to her were full of concern and advice and love for her. Each letter is a valuable gem, it is possible here to give only a few extracts.

Shoilabala Das]

FIRST LETTER :

(This letter shows her father's anxiety on account of her health in not hearing from her the full account of her voyage).

Cuttack
Orissa, India
11th September, 1906

My Darling Child,

I got your telegram from Aden at 2 am. of the 6th instant. I had no sleep that day. The expectation of getting news of you on the following day (for the steamer was due at Aden on the 7th) increased my anxiety and brought on sleeplessness. I got your wire, but it was a disappointment. I lost my faith in the usefulness of Cook's Unicode. It is good for purpose of business, but is of no use where feelings are concerned. I was anxious to know (1) whether you were seasick, if so, whether the sea sickness prevented you from taking any food and drove you to starvation; (2) whether your general health has

improved or gone down. These are questions which constantly rose and still rise before my mind and keep up a high state of feverish anxiety which I fear I shall have to bear till I get your letter. I sent a wire to you to Port Said. I hope you will get it and I hope also you will adopt usual language in replying to it. In future whenever you have occasion (which God forbid) to wire me about your health, please adopt plain language as will give me a definite idea of your ailments. When I wire to you to allay my anxiety even when such anxiety arises from mere imagination I beg of you not to keep me in the dark and not to give me any false information...

I am anxious and will be anxious to know how the climate treats you and how the environments of your new student life and the demands of the College rules upon your time, attention and temperament harmonize with your preconceived ideas and ambition of that life...

Write to me a full account of all you did during the voyage, of your journey across France, of your experience of English Channel which is an introduction to the restless energy which you find in the country whereto the Channel is the entrance. Don't forget to consult a good doctor, a specialist and let me know the result after you have tried his prescription and advice for a few days.

I am particularly anxious to see you healthy, for without good health and a strong and robust constitution my ambition regarding your useful life in my country will be worse than a hobby. This is my only ambition now and I pray to God to grant me this boon...

Believe me

Your ever loving father

SECOND LETTER:

(Her father's humorous remarks on Cook's Unicode)

Cuttack,

Wednesday, 19th Sept., 1906

My Darling Child,

I have been most anxious all this while. I got your wire this morning at 10 am.. You have treated me very badly. I expected to get a wire from Marseilles, that was the understanding; but evidently

Chandra was right in his appreciation of your principles of economy. I expected the contents to be otherwise than I found them. I asked you most clearly, if not solicitously, to wire to me all about your health and address. Your wire dated yesterday morning has two words; the first is "Relix" and the other is "anxious". Your beloved code does not contain any word "Relix", it is probably "Felix" the word I used in my wire to Port Said. Now you see my dear child you have less reason to be anxious for me than I on your account; I am in my old environment; whereas you are in a strange country among strangers with environments which are not in unison with the experiences of your whole life. I never had any faith in your unicode; it is a unique code to which the keys of human language can furnish no accomplishment. Messers Thomas Cook and Sons must have found the materials for their code, among the debris of the linguistic structure raised by our ancestors at Babel. My experience of today compel me to ask, request, beseech and entreat you not to use that Code unless you wish to punish me and even in that case I would prefer the Penal Code, as that is based on known logical principle.

Your ever loving father.

THIRD LETTER :

Calcutta
Grand Hotel
20th Sept., 1906

My darling Shoila,

I know what a bad correspondent I am and how I do my best to avoid correspondence by telegram, but I have not the same feeling in your case now. I feel I could write to you a great deal more, When I begin to write I find my mind is crowded with thoughts but when I think of the distance between us 99 percent of these thoughts appear unfit for communication as they are sure to grow unpalatable by the time they reach you, as would be a parcel of Jilipi, in response to your craving for hot Jilipis. You must be prepared for only such news as would keep long and won't get spoiled.

From your wire it seems the India Office have selected Maria Grey's Training College. I am very glad to hear it. Your College reopened yesterday and I suppose you three were there. It is difficult to picture to myself the wonder, astonishment and the curiosity which

your presence among a number of English girls must have created among them. I would not be surprised if one of them re-enacted the part of the boy who on hearing the first Indian Visitor to England (Raja Ram Mohan Roy) address a meeting exclaimed with a wonder-depicted face (such as a Punch artist alone could sketch) "Hallo, he speaks." I should not be surprised if some of your would-be fellow students feel a similar wonder, My dear child, remember your duty to your mother country. Do everything you can to impress all those you come in contact with, whether as friends, or as playmates, or as fellow students or as mere visitors that the Indian women possess the virtues of her sex in a degree which the English woman would do well to learn from her. Love, kindness, forbearance, charity are par excellence womanly virtues. Religion is her special sphere. In India she has upto this moment held the strongholds of superstition against the attacks of Buddhism, Mohammedanism, all-ism and no-ism. That shows her social and religious strength. Let your life shine there. In my old age I indulge in fond hopes which would appear absurd to others, but to you my sweet child they should be no secrets. May it be your share in life to elevate the Indian woman in the eyes of England. They have an idea that we treat our women as servants because they do not join us at dinners, do not take the prominent position which hostesses have in European Society. But this is a false picture which the disordered Camera of missionary reports produces. In the East the idea of honour is associated with humility and power belongs to the unostentatious. These principles, are enclosed as it were in a nutshell in Christ washing the feet of his disciples. The European often defends woman's position in social economy by the remark that the mistress of a house takes the important position because her husband gives it to her. This is a most fallacious argument. I give here the refutation of the argument.

(1) Supposing the husband gives it, the wife would not take it if she understood the value of humility, if she understood that real power resides below the surface unnoticed. The root of a tree which feeds the tree lies below. The power of gravitation resides away from the surface of the earth. The Almighty Power is beyond the horizon of human vision.

(2) The disciples of Christ wanted to wash Christ's feet, but he did not allow them. My own opinion is that England has not yet learnt

to give woman the position which the mother of a nation ought to have.

The Englishman does not give the same honour to his mother and sister and daughter that he gives to his wife. This would not be so if the position of woman were rightly understood. In India the mother stands much higher than the wife. I want you to think over these matters.

As regards dress etc. avoid anything which lends to point to vanity. It is necessary in a foreign country to establish your respectability by dressing according to your position in the beginning. Plain dress should be used on subsequent occasions. For once your respectability is established plainness brings more honour than show.

There have been Sutties in India, but treatment like that accorded to Joan of Arc was never in Indian woman's share.

I have written to you a long letter and I hope you will not blame me for inflicting lectures on you.

With love and my blessings
Your loving
Father.

FOURTH LETTER :

(The following extract is from his letter of 23rd September, 1905 that he was most anxious about his daughter's health. He was full of his usual wit and humour and writes most humorously about the High Court Judges, who were travelling with Miss Shoilabala Das on the same boat. They were about seven or eight of them and they all knew Miss Das and her father well.)

Cuttack,
23rd September, 1906

Dearest Child,

I have been amused by your remarks about the *physical jurisdiction* of the High Court Judges. I don't know whether the expression I have used is sufficiently significant. I should perhaps say muscular jurisdiction. Their work is practically an easy one, if not a pleasant one. It resembles the feat of the voracious eater, who has spread out before him a large table elaborately laden with dishes of all kinds, good, bad and indifferent which a dozen of cooks have

worked hard to produce.

The position of a High Court Judge reminds me of the Ex-King of Oudh who had at dinner time daily brought before him hundreds of dishes served before him. These dishes were cooked by his 250 wives. It was his pleasant duty to select some out of these numerous dishes and he claimed and got more credit for this than his wives got for cooking them. The lawyers place before the Judge all the facts and law connected with a case and his duty is to select and swallow some and let alone the rest. But he claims great credit for this, and in this respect he is worse than the Ex-King of Oudh, for the latter fed and clothed his wives and therefore in some sense his arrogance was pardonable, whereas a Judge does not do any such thing to a lawyer. This makes his conduct the more unpardonable. Even in this easy work of selection he errs and swallows stuff which he cannot digest and the appellate Court has to administer reproof of a very bitter kind.

Yours ever affectionate
Father.

FIFTH LETTER :

(The following extracts from his letter of the 20th October, 1906 give valuable advice to his daughter with regard to her studies and life in England and as to what should be her aims to realise the mission of her life.)

Cuttack
The 20th October, 1906

Dearest Shoila,

As regards your education I should like you to learn the methods of teaching. It will be an immense gain if you can also add to your store of knowledge. If all the women of our country knew what you know we would have been a very different nation. Our educated ladies do not know to teach others of their sex what they know. Unless one knows the methods of teaching, she does not take an interest in the dissemination of her knowledge.

I have been very much interested in your description of the method of teaching followed there. I am glad you value and wish for a return of childhood to have the benefit of the system. I am really happy that you have these thoughts. That assures me of your appreciation of my object in sending you to learn these methods for

the good of our country and gives me the further assurance that you will pay attention to them.

It should be your aim to have a good reputation there. One thing you must guard against in that country and that is giving airs. The Englishman hates pride. He will not have overbearing manners even from Edward VII and yet will do anything for a humble and weak person. You have ample proof of it in the way they value Christ's character, *He was meek as a lamb*, remember this always in your conduct with people.

Last night I have given most serious thoughts to the question of your residence in England. I imagined myself in your position and I shall tell you what I would have done. The first question I would have asked myself is - Can I after having been my master for so many years *descend* to the level of the disciplined life of a student ? I would not have allowed my mind to deceive me in the hasty excitement and momentary zeal for intellectual improvement. I would have calmly considered the conditions under which intellectual growth is possible. Is it not a fact that the children of the rich are always failures ? Why is this ? The surroundings are not favourable to intellectual growth. University education in India has been a failure . The result in the English Universities is very different. In our recent attempts to improve the education of our youths the greatest stress has been laid on hostels. That is an important factor in the life of a student. The company of fellow students is a valuable stimulant in student life. Man cannot thrive in water. Fish cannot grow on dry land. The reason in both cases are unsuitable surroundings. We all draw our substance from the surroundings of our life. This is as true of moral and intellectual life as it is of physical life.

If a student spends most of his time or at least any appreciable portion of his time among people whose aim of life, however student-like in College days, is otherwise at the moment when the student seeks their company, such student is sure to go adrift from the moonings of a student. Then if I could not make up my mind to submit to or to take cheerfully to my new surroundings I would have abandoned the idea of study. I would not have given my new friends in a foreign country to understand that I came to learn, for I would fall very much in their estimation if I changed from a student visitor

to England to a mere sightseer. If my students were poor, I would have considered it an advantage and would have made most of my advantage. I would have said to myself they are poor, but they are all intellectual, all graduates and to live two years amongst these persons, is like what living among the hills of Himalayas is to a man of the plains. I should have enjoyed the mountain air of these intellectual peaks, filled my lungs with the healthy mountain air. If the hills were bare, poor in ornaments of nature, forests and trees, I would have considered it an advantage as giving me an unobstructed view of the whole hill, as giving me easy access to every part, as giving me opportunities of examining the bare soil on which in the older hills in the same chain, tall majestic pines and oaks rear their proud heads to the clouds and I would have taken precious notes of the value of the soil.

Your loving father.

SIXTH LETTER :

(The extracts from his letter of the 20th February, 1907 tells his daughter not to be under too much obligation to any one, without making suitable material expressions of one's appreciation.)

Darling Child,

I am writing to the Political A.D.C. Sir Curzon Wyllie and also to Lady Wyllie, Sir Albert and Lady Spicer, Lady Elliot, Miss Samuel and Mr. Ashton thanking them for all their kindness to you. It is not desirable to carry too heavy a load of obligation in a foreign country. You are a weak little girl, unable to bear too much burden of any kind. I believe you have some Cuttack-made fileigree things that will be acceptable as presents. I am also sending you some silver things by today's mail. Try to acknowledge obligations not only in words but also in suitable material expressions of the feelings. The Englishman is a materialist, he believes in material embodiment of feelings. Feelings are worth nothing if they do not find expression in overt acts. They resemble clouds surcharged with water but do not rain. Feelings are nothing. They are fountains of action and if they do not find their way out they are dead springs. I am glad you are going to be presented to Court by Lady Spicer. Please give me a full account of the function.

SEVENTH LETTER :

(Extracts from his letter of the 10th April, 1907)

My Darling Child,

I owe an apology and an expression of regret for not having thought of you on your birthday. It is not correct to say that I did not think of you on 25th of March, but I did not remember that that was your birthday. Not a day passes wherever I am when I do not think of you at least twenty times. I may truly in the word of the poet say "Wherever I am whatever realms to see, my heart untrammelled fondly turns to thee."

But you know my darling child I do not attach any importance to expression of feelings on particular occasions. They are like occasional thunder storms which are good when the atmosphere is charged with unhealthy gases, but a healthy atmosphere which maintains an equably healthy atmosphere does not require these occasional storms.

These occasional outbursts of good feelings are valuable when they come from friends who have no occasion to remember you everyday. If I had remembered the day as your birthday I don't know whether I would have sent you a present, but I would have wished you many returns of it. This I do now and in doing so I wish you still longer life for to wish you many returns of 20th April means the wish for a longer life than a wish for the returns of the 25th March would mean.

I hope you will accept this.

Yours loving father.

EIGHTH LETTER :

(In his letter of the 17th April 1907 he tells her what she would speak of India in the meeting of the Drawing room of the Duchess of Warwick where she had been asked to say a few words on "India".)

My Darling Child,

You have been asked to speak of India. That is a big subject. You should speak mostly about Christianity and its influence in India, don't trespass in political grounds. It is dangerous and requires great tact. You should begin by referring to the great interest the Christian public in England have always shown in the wellbeing of the Indians.

England has spent millions in her attempts to preach Christianity in India and it must be no small source of disappointment to the numerous men and women who have given their money and energy in the cause, to find that an inappreciable portion of the population of India have accepted Christianity to this day. It is true that there is a large Christian population in India; it is much larger than it was a quarter of a century ago; but then the population of India has increased and I should think that the proportion of the Christian to the non-Christian has not gained to an appreciable extent. If we add to this the fact that the Christian population has increased by birth, there is no much to congratulate ourselves on the result if we measure the results by numerical strength of the Christian population. But to count conversion by heads is not the right way to estimate the labours of those interested in Mission work. The man who works in the field to prepare the soil is engaged in a more important work than the labourers who gather the corn. The man who is engaged in teaching the youngman is engaged in a more responsible work than the man who presents the successful candidate for a degree at the Convocation. The man who breaks down and levels to the ground the fortifications which form the works of the defence of a town is deserving of more honour than the man who unfurls the national flag of the victorious army after the town is captured.

There is no doubt that the spread of English literature, Western thought and the direct teaching of the Bible have done much to prepare the minds of the nation to receive Christ at a future date. It is impossible for an Indian to dissociate Christ from all that is good and noble in English literature and history. Had not Christianity come to England, England would not have been what she is today. Europe is what Christianity made it. All that is good and noble in England has Christianity at its root. Take your early public instructions. The University and other seats of learning were founded from religious motives. Whatever might be said of their present management and objects, an enquiry into their origin reveals Christ. We Indians have seen the influence of Christ in everything connected with the English nation. Christianity has moulded character of the English nation. It is impossible for an Indian to contemplate England without Christ as its architect. But the Englishman in his life, in his teachings, in his relations with the Indians repudiates any connection with Christianity.

The Lecturers in the Government College wish his pupils to study English, History, English Literature, English Politics as having no connection with Christ. The civilian in his work of administration disavows all connection with Christianity as if he happens to be a Christian in faith, but in the discharge of his official duties, he feigns the life of a non-Christian and he has not the courage of an avowal of his Christian principles. I do not wish that he should enforce his Christian principles on Hindus and Mohammedans, he need not force his christian principles down the throats of his non-Christian subordinates and subjects, but he certainly can give expression to his sense of disapproval of that which is revolting to Christian principles. Very often his conduct is curable judging by universal principles of morality in a position of authority, placed beyond the power of correction by those whom his conduct affects. The people consider his censurable life as the result of growth amidst Christian environments. People think and say -----this is the result of Christian education in a Christian Country.

Missionaries out in India do not consider it any part of their duty to exercise their influence over the lives of officials. The two communities live apart as far from one another as do the natives apart from Europeans. Both are engaged in raising India to the rank of a civilised country. The work of one is as important as the other. It is impossible for any country to raise its standard unless it believes in and practices the cardinal principles of Christianity. The recent achievements of Japan in the sphere of warfare have sometimes been cited to prove that it is possible for a non-Christian nation to be great. But who argue this, forget that the principles of Christianity are dear to every Japanese. The Japanese are Buddhists and Buddha is an eminent illustration of life of self-denial and humility. To profess Christianity as one's faith is not to appreciate the principles of Christianity. A man might not be baptized and he might have a keen sense of appreciation of the Christian principle; on the other hand, a man might be baptized a Christian and yet might believe in principles which are not deducible from the life of Christ. The two cardinal virtues which stand out prominently in the life of Christ are humility and readiness to forgive, Christ washing the feet of his disciples and praying for the forgiveness for those who crucified him are the two events which appeal most to the Eastern mind. Self-denial enters

into both of these as an important factor. The Indian has been accustomed to believe in a thousand incarnations of the Deity. There are so many avatars; Ram, Krishna, Chaitanya are all incarnations. An incarnation is an act of condescension on the part of the Divine Being. God is worshipped and feared when he is in heaven but He is loved when He comes down to meet man on earth. It is love mingled with reverence, but devoid of the feeling of fear. Comparing man or rather referring to human nature for the sake of illustration Her Gracious Majesty, the late Queen Victoria is loved most when we hear of visits to the cottage of some poor woman or of her kindness of a personal character to some poor man or woman.

With love and good wishes,
Your loving father



VII

LETTERS TO RAJENDRA NARAYANA BHANJA DEO

[Mr. M.S. Das, the grand old man of Orissa and the first Oriya Minister, was the architect of Orissa as a separate Province which he himself did not live to see. During his life time he not only wanted to build a new Orissa but also was keen on building men of stature and ability to safeguard the interest of Orissa. This desire of Mr. Das has found expression in many of his letters, speeches and writings. Mr. Das found in Raja Sri R.N. Bhanja Deo (my father the Late Raja of Kanika) an young comrade-in-arms to ventilate his ideas and implement his schemes in amalgamating the outlying Oriya tracts through the Utkal Union Conference movements.

Mr. Das's association with our family dates back to 1903-4 when my father was the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the First Utkal Union Conference held at Cuttack in that year which was presided over by Sreeram Chandra Bhanja, Maharaja of Mayurbhanj. Most of the Committee meetings of the Utkal Union Conference were held at our place Kanika Rajbati, Cuttack. Then my father presided over the Berhampur Session in 1906.

Mr. Das and my father were contemporary in the Bengal Legislative Council (1909). He was then 59 and my father was 28 years old. During this period, in 1910 visualising the great promise my father held out to him, he wanted him to be a Barrister-at-Law, not so much to be a lawyer but to improve his status in the public life. So my father on taking leave of the House (Bengal Legislative Council) for six months sailed to England and joined the Lincoln's Inn.

When he left India on 23rd April, 1910 from the port of Bombay in the Vessel "S.S. Mantua" it appears Mr. Das went to see him off and there without the knowledge of my father posted three letters which were carried by the same Boat to be delivered to him—one at Aden, the second at Port Shed and the third in London (as it appears from the Postal stamps on the covers—each letter was sent by

registered post and postage stamps worth annas three only were affixed).

These three letters of Mr. Das contain some valuable advice to this young Legislator (my father). The letters are self explanatory and they are reproduced below adverbatim. This would show the profound love and affection that Mr. Das had towards my father and the keen interest he took in shaping his career.

I believe the words of advice of Mr. Das in 1910 hold good and are relevant to our youths even to-day.

--S.N.Bhanja Deo]

FIRST LETTER — Delivered at Aden :

Bombay
22-4-1910

My dearest Rajendra,

You are in the Ocean, that immeasurable, vast and mighty collection of water which has manifested its power in destroying wealthy cities, and building of wealthy cities on barren sandy shores. The contemplation of the mighty ocean ought to fill your mind with thoughts helpful to the noble object which takes you to England. The voyage might be an aid to you if you think of it and read the incidents, events and the surroundings in a serious mood. If you look at the rocky shores of Aden you will notice the incessant beating of the waves on them. The Sea wishes to subdue the part. Man has tried to construct walls and dams to resist the encroachment of the Sea. But the result of the battle is yet unknown. At any rate it has cost man more than it has cost the Sea. The additional strength in the shape of stone walls shows the defeat of man. The secret of successful and sure though slow progress of the Sea is due its steady and continuous effort. There is an old saying "Water falling day by day wears the hardy rocks away". Time has proved its truth by experience. If you look at the water of the Sea you will notice a continuous succession of the waves one following the other. They vary in their height and consequently in their strength. Sometimes they are high, at other time they are low but there they are always. They never die.

Human feelings have been compared to waves. The comparison is a very apt one. The human heart is the sea on bosom of which rise the waves of human feelings and wishes. Man's wishes rouse feelings, the feelings agitate the heart. But very often these

wishes and feelings find obstructions on their way. Their progress, that is the attainment of the object wished for, is arrested and obstructed by rocks. These rocks are to be found in every man's nature. They are the enemies, the obstruction to an individuals progress. Rocks in the physical world are formed by small tiny particles of dust brought together. They are often brought together by the current of water. They remain for some time and under the combined effect of different physical forces they turn into rocks. Please note that water brings them together and eventually they gather strength and obstruct the march of the Ocean—the king of waters. So it is with human nature. Man harbours various improper feelings. The combined effect of this feeling is the formation of a habit. This habit which is formed by improper feelings at last proves an obstruction to the cultivation of proper wishes and feelings. Feelings produce habit and habit in its turn obstructs feelings. To conquer the habit, the feelings of the right kind must be continually present before the mind. They must be like the continuous string of waves in the sea, incessantly striking against the rocks of the habit, till the habit melts away under the influence of feelings of right kind. Picture to your imagination, paint on the canvas of your imagination a rock standing with its form and determined to stand as if frowning on the sea below and its waves beating constantly to remove it, so that the sea might add to its conquests—might add to its possessions. Then imagine all of a sudden the rock giving way before a might wave. What would the waves do ? They would leap over the remnant crags of the rock like a warrior flourishing his sword after a victory in the battle field. This picture will help you to form an idea to have a fair taste of the indescribable pleasure you will experience and enjoy when your noble feelings and wishes, which are springing up now, conquer the feelings, wishes, ambition and habit, which have made your past life, which it should not have been considering the opportunities and means God placed at the disposal of your guardians for your education.

Think of the Sea

As far as your eyes can travel lies outstretched before you and behind you and around you the mighty endless area the blue waters below, sometimes in unison and sometimes in contrast with the canopy of heaven above. What are the constituents of the sea ?

Rivers, streams, rivulets and rain water collect and make the mighty sea. Drops of water fall from the clouds. Rain water has no colour. It falls on the ground. Millions of drops fall on the land. Many form a streamlet. They begin to move, according to the law of their nature towards the sea. Though originally they had no colour—I mean the drops of water when they descended from heaven—they take their colour from the land over which the streamlet flows. Rivers and streams have their distinctive colour. These colours they take from the nature of the soil over which they flow. I should have said from the colour of soil over which they flow. But when they meet the sea, or more correctly speaking, when they merge in the sea they lose their colour and assume one colour—the blue of the sea. So long as rivers and streams retain their colour they can be conquered and have been conquered by man. Very often they die a natural death. Rivers and streams dry up when skies dry up—when there is no rain. Man builds bridges over rivers, tunnels under them. But when these streams and rivers cast away their colour and assume one colour they form the mighty unconquerable sea. We imagine Dreadnoughts and Mantua's are man's conquests over mighty ocean. This is a mistake. These vessels are what a paper kite is to the air. They are playthings and toys which exist by sufferance but can be destroyed in one angry moment.

The human soul comes from God — from Heaven, it comes as an image of God. It has no nationalism or nationality just as rain water has no colour. But when this heavenly soul is born in this world, it grows amidst the customs, manners, ideas and the standard of civilization prevailing at the time in the country or village where the individual soul is born. Like the rain drops human beings take their colour from the country where they live. But till a man is able to think of himself denuded of all that is due to the physical and intellectual and moral influence which work for his development, he cannot contemplate on humanity. Humanity is the sea where the human souls meet without their colour. Humanity cannot be conquered.

Methinks you ask me what is the duty of man when he is one of a nation or race? Has he no duty towards the country where he lives? Is he to contemplate on humanity denuded of all nationality? What would patriotism then mean? The rivers teach what we should do. The streams run through the country. They take their colour from

the soil over which they diffuse fertility and prosperity. But streams run towards the ocean. They have double duty——duty at the time and the duty of their nature——the ultimate duty, if I may so call the latter. If the streams don't run towards the ocean they stagnate and stagnant water is the hot-bed of germs of various diseases— malaria being the most common in India. We must work for the well being of our race and nation, but we must so work that the race might join in the march of humanity in which we as an individual must join whether we wish it or not, for that is the law of our nature, the will of our Creator and the design of human constitution.

The P & O steamers are "museums of nationalism and nationality". Read the characters below the surface and see whether the individual soul is moving towards the ultimate and the development of humanity.

I have talked to you long and very likely tired and bored you. So I must take leave of you for the present.

May God be with you, guide you, counsel you and protect you from all evils and perils of the sea, is the sincere prayer of

Your ever affly,

Dada

SECOND LETTER — Delivered at Port Said :

Bombay

23rd April 1910

My dearest Rajendra,

Where do we meet again ? Have you past the sandy tracts on the sides of the Canal ? Or are still within your horizon ? How barren these sands are? It was on this part that the Isralites (Jews) crossed when they left Egypt, the country of their slavery. They were slaves in Egypt. They crossed this part and they entered the land of freedom. It is strange that even now this is the boundary line between that part of the earth which is inhabited by subject races and the part where races and nations govern themselves. Before you is the Mediteranean Sea, behind you is the sandy desert. The Mediteranean is in the middle of the earth. Hence its name. You are yet below the middle of ordinary span of human life. The middle point has yet to be reached. Behind you is a desert. Every man's past life is a desert.

There is no man who does not contemplate his past life without a sense of regret. So we all have sandy deserts behind us but in many cases the barren deserts cover the whole span of life. You have seen your past in its true character early. You feel that you have missed your opportunities. You have awakened to a sense of your loss before you reached middle point of life. In you the Mediteranean has appeared early. Take your lessons from the Sea. Look forward to the Sea to teach your incessant activity, to teach you all that I wrote to you about in my last letter. Look behind and note why there is a desert behind you. Note the causes that turned an area, which should have been full of green, into a barren desert. You were born with all that contribute to make a life useful to the world, helpful to others and a source of happiness to one's self. But your occasional remarks have lead me to think that you are not satisfied with the results of your past life. I don't know if I have read your feeling rightly, but even if I have misread them, I hope I shall not be blamed for thinking that you have had your share of common experience of mankind which is seldom without feeling of regret as regards to the past.

The only remedy for what has been lost in the past is to use most carefully the present. It is curious fact, but nevertheless it is true, that very often the horse which is last at the start is first at the winning post. Incidents of idle and truant boyhood succeeded by glorious life are not wanting in the history of our own time. Keshab Chandra Sen was a failure at Schools.

Never lose sight of the objects of your pursuits. Follow the example of the hound when he is in pursuit of a game.

Good-bye for the present.

Wish you health and enjoyment on board.

Yours ever affectionately,
DADA

THIRD LETTER — Delivered at London :

Bombay

23rd April, 1910

My dearest Rajendra,

You are now in Ludgate Circus. The City itself is a Circus, and the Ludgate Circus is a Circus in a Circus. I have called London a Circus. Where is the similarity you might naturally ask? What is a

Circus? It is a place for the exhibition of wonderful feats of man—feats of athletic, feats of acrobatic nature, feats of the wonderful domination of man over brute creatures. Looked in this light London is a circus, for here you see man doing things which would be considered beyond human power in other parts of the world. You will see here the development of human nature in all its parts—good and bad, virtues and vices. I dare say you have read of the “busy bee” when a child. The bee visits all flowers. Some are pretty, some are sweet scented, some emit unplesant smell. To the bee these are not attractions. To this little insect outward appearances are nothing. It examines each flower in order to see whether it yields honey and if honey is to be had, it does not matter whether the flower is bright in colour or not, the bee forms associations with the flower. You have an object in view that should be your honey; form your friendship with men whose company will be helpful to you in the attainment of your object.

England has wrecked many an Indian's life. That you must have heard. Thank God it has not yet wrecked any son of Orissa. Here is your responsibility. I know you are very wisely conscious of your responsibilities in this respect, but you are now amongst people many of whom do not realise their responsibility.

I am certain you will benefit both in body and in intellect by your visit to England. I don't like to take up much of your time for I know you have urgent and important matters to attend to, soon after your arrival.

Goodbye. May God be by you always and guide you.

Your ever affectionate
DADA

[This letter was addressed “C/o Thomas Cook & Sons”, (Travel Agents whose head office was at Ludgate Circus, London). They forwarded it to my father at Westminster Palace Hotel, Victoria Street.]



Debendra Kumar Dash (1954) teaches Oriya language and literature in Rourkela Municipal College, Rourkela (Orissa). He has authored two books and sixty papers on literary theory and criticism, 19th century socio-cultural history. In 1990 he has been awarded 'Kshetravasi Sahitya Vidya Puraskar' by the Insitute of Oriya Studies, Cuttack (Orissa) for his contribution to Oriya literary criticism.

Pragati Utkal Sangha (Estd. 1958) is a premier socio-cultural organisation of Rourkela (Orissa). It has rendered commendable service in patronising Library, Public Reading Room and other socio-cultural activities. In recent times, it has emerged as a publishing house by publishing a number of books for popularisation and assessment of great Oriya personalities. The major titles are : 'Madhusudan – The Legislator', 'Satabdir Nayak Gourishankar' (in Oriya), 'Gangadhar – Kavita O Kavi-atma' (in Oriya) and 'Chintanayak Mansingh' (in Oriya).

Pragati Utkal Sangha is a veritable source of inspiration for the Oriya-speaking people and the epitome of Oriya Culture.